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NEA Today

May 2003

The Magazine of the National Education Association

Insurance Trust Summary Annual Report Enclosed.
See page 41.

What Now?

The No Child Left Behind Act is coming full throttle. What's off track. And what NEA's doing about it.

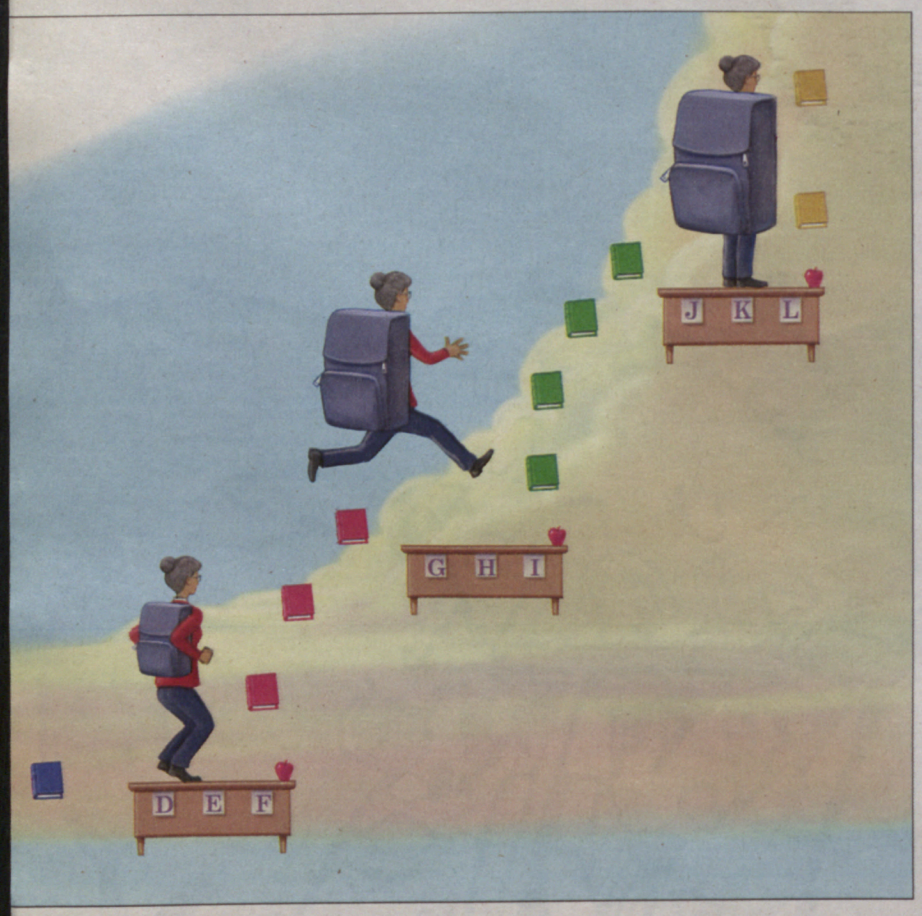
SEE PAGE 20.

NEA Today

May 2003

Volume 21 • Number 8

COVER STORY



No Child Left Behind?

The federal No Child Left Behind Act is leaving educators in a bind. To learn about the law's shortcomings, what that means to you, and how educators can work with NEA to bring about change, see *NEA Today*'s special report starting on page 20.

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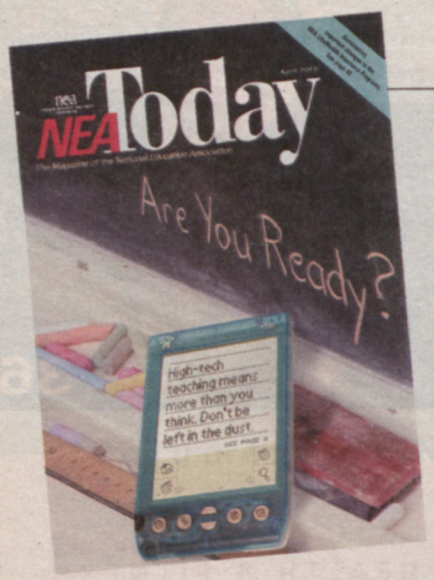
Great Public Schools for Every Child

Cover illustration: Daniel Baxter. Illustration opposite page: Joe Kulka; clockwise from upper left: Charles Votaw, Kyle Brehm, David Morris, Dan Loftin, and David Zalubowski.



Letters

BLEND, DON'T ADD

I do information technology training and technical support for my high school faculty and I enjoyed "Are You Ready?" (cover story, April). It was one of the few articles in recent educational publications to say that information technology cannot be an add-on for teachers, but should blend into what they do.

One thing about the article disappointed me, however. The opening paragraph refers to technology as a tool. Technology is not a tool. It uses tools. Technology is not a thing, but rather a process that people perform. Teachers are being misled to think that adding computers is adding technology. In reality, they already perform technological processes, whether they use computers or not.

Wayne Lang
Rapid City, South Dakota

I disagree with Lynn Nolan of the International Society for Technology in Education when she says, "It's no longer about professional development on basic computing skills, but more professional development on technology integration."

We need to move away from the idea that technology is a subject area. Until we present professional development in all areas of the curriculum with a technology component, it will not become embedded in our teaching. Good teaching is good teaching. You use the tools that are most appropriate for the task at hand.

Patty Yamano
Agoura, California

PUPPY LOVE

I find it interesting that you now are featuring articles about therapy and support dogs in the classroom (In Focus, April). I teach special education for kindergarten through third grade and have been using therapy dogs in my classroom this year. I started using the dogs to encourage my students to write about their experience.

It has been a huge success in my room. I am glad to learn it is working in other classrooms.

Pattie Gibbs
Bethalto, Illinois

TEN COMMANDMENTS

As a solution to the controversy over posting the Ten Commandments in classrooms, I propose The New Ten Commandments:

1. Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.
2. Seek liberty and justice for all.
3. Be diligent in the care of the environment.
4. Just say NO to illegal drugs.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
6. Thou shall not kill.
7. Thou shall not commit adultery.
8. Thou shall not steal.
9. Thou shall not bear false witness.
10. Thou shall not drink and drive.

This avoids the church/state issue, while providing moral guidance for youth in today's world.

Gene Barmore
Huntington Beach, California

Stephanie Dalton Cowan

HIGH-STAKES QUESTIONS

In the March President's Viewpoint Reg Weaver stated the problem very clearly: How do we ensure that policy makers recognize high-stakes testing is not the answer?

Who are these policy makers? I do not know where or how to find them, let alone speak to them.

I am an elementary special education teacher in a small rural district, strapped for cash and space. How can the government hold us accountable via high-stakes testing when it is not accountable to its own laws?

By refusing to fully fund special education and punishing districts unable to provide programming mandated by the law, the federal government is engineering the demise, not only of special education, but of small school districts.

Adrienne Parsons
Danforth, Maine

Editor's note: One quick way to contact members of Congress is to visit NEA's Legislative Action Center at www.nea.org/lac. There you'll find information on who your elected officials in the House and Senate are, plus an easy way to send them a letter.

NEA and members can moan and groan over high-stakes testing, but the reality is that society wants it. For many years, schools graduated students who could not function in society. Now, society wants to ensure that graduates meet some minimum criteria. What's wrong with that? Many countries require entrance exams for continuing education. Students who don't pass are relegated to vocations.

For many years, our district has been giving high-stakes tests valued at 20 percent of a student's grade. I do have to eliminate some areas I would like to teach to cover the objectives on the test. But the district is paying my salary.

I agree with Reg Weaver that teachers should have input. But school should be preparation for life, and high-stakes tests are part of life.

Robert Oldfield
Mesa, Arizona

Whenever I hear about intensive and extensive testing of students, I'm reminded of a story I once heard about a farmer who raised hogs for market. He was so concerned about whether his hogs were gaining weight on his special diets that he weighed them every hour. The poor hogs spent so much time being weighed that they had no time to eat and starved to death.

Does high-stakes testing get in the way of our students' hunger for knowledge?

Kathy Dallaire
Chester, New Hampshire

HATS OFF

I was deeply moved by two articles in the March issue. One was "IDEA Faces Reauthorization." I am a retired business education teacher. I used to teach typing to special education students. I thought my students would benefit from typing real reports rather than just copying from a typing manual, but I had trouble getting other teachers to give these students assignments to type. I wish I had Ken Johnson in my school. I'm sure that he could have been more successful.

The other article that really got to me was "The Straitjacket of Standardized Tests" by Tom McKenna. I had tears in my eyes. The more the public is involved with the school system, the more they know what is being done and are more likely to support the school.

My hat goes off to both of these gentlemen. I hope both schools realize how fortunate they are to have them.

Ernest Welch
New London, New Hampshire

THE DEVIL LOST

"For Sale—Your Kids," (book review, March) refers to the "Faustian bargain" schools make with Channel One. Our school entered into the contract to obtain free televisions, but we stayed because of the high quality of the programming.

Channel One does an exceptionally good job with features of special interest to teenagers such as eating disorders, teen domestic (dating) violence, and drug use.

I remember one feature about five years ago on depression. During the program, I saw that a girl in the back of my room had tears running down her face. I took her into the hall and asked what was wrong. She turned her wrists to me to show where she had been cutting herself. We went straight to the counselor's office! She called me recently and thanked me for saving her life.

I let my students talk during the commercials, so most of them paid little attention to the commercials. In exchange, students who would seldom watch the news were exposed to in-depth coverage by reporters slightly older than themselves. If this is a Faustian bargain, it is one the devil lost!

Priscilla Darley
Athens, Georgia

WILLING TO WAIT

I am a second year education major and head of the youth department at my church. I am also a 19-year-old male who is proudly a virgin (Debate, February). I have lived up to a vow to remain sexually abstinent.

However, my decision was not influenced by my years in public schools. Sadly, most abstinence-only education is flawed. It amounts to scare tactics: Don't have sex because you might get pregnant or contract AIDS. This approach is worthless.

While I believe in separation of church and state, I think the state could learn a few lessons from the church on this issue. Why did I decide to remain abstinent? I went through a program called "True Love Waits." One of its key concepts is that a vow of abstinence is made to

others, not to yourself. Out of respect for my current and future families, my friends, my girlfriends, my future spouse, and my future children, I vowed to remain abstinent until I was married. Respect has been a central aspect of my dating life. I hope abstinence-only education can move away from scare tactics and towards respect, concern, and responsibility.

Mark Adkins
Utica, Kentucky

DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS

The latest setback for public schools comes from a bill passed in the Ohio legislature that allows for even more charter schools. It appears that public schools are under attack.

Perhaps the legislature and leaders of public schools need to examine the major reasons why parents are lured to charter schools and home schooling. It is not because of low academic achievement in the public schools.

Instead, their departure may result because many of the most disruptive and aggressive students in the public schools are permitted to remain in the classroom at the expense of other students. These disruptive and aggressive students, who represent only 3 to 5 percent of the student population, now use up to 80 percent of a teacher's time.

Meanwhile, the silent majority of students who want to be in school and who will follow rules are having their education held hostage by these students.

There should be alternative educational placements at every grade level for students who do not qualify for special education but who will not or cannot function in a typical school setting.

David Gannon
Canton, Ohio

TRULY SPECIAL NEEDS

I have seen the phenomenal growth of special education/special services in the last 10 years. There are problems brewing, such as the large number of students who are classified as special needs students because of state funding rather than special needs. Huge sums of money are spent on the needs of individual students or on collaborative specialists sitting in regular classes.

Because of special education class sizes and room use, regular class sizes are increasing and new rooms must be built. Taxes are going up. We have to get a hold on this problem.

Only students who truly need special help and can't get it from their regular teachers should be classified into special education. I've heard many times that fault lies in "the law" and we can't do anything about it. Let's change the law.

Ray DiGrazia
Waldwick, New Jersey

HEALTHY KIDS LEARN

Why don't we push for healthy children in our schools? Let's push for national health care cards with care begun in infancy to catch problems early, so children will really be able to learn.

Marilyn Sim
Troy, Ohio

WHERE'S THE SHORTAGE?

I am a new teacher. I have put in the hard hours, fed my kids microwave meals, communicated in "good mornings" and "good nights" with my husband, and for what? I got a pink slip. After years of education and hard work, I simply am cast aside as a budget woe. I have dealt with the insecurity of where my next job will be for two consecutive years and now face more. I have been to other districts and it is the same everywhere: "We are cutting back."

Where is the teacher shortage? And at what point do all these politicians who are elected by teachers on the education bandwagon put their money where they hope their vote is?

Dawn Boldrin
Camarillo, California

REMEMBERING A GOOD NEIGHBOR

The death of Fred Rogers was felt by millions of Americans and educators across the country. I hope we can all use him as our inspiration when we teach. If we teach students to like themselves and assure them that they are special just the way they are, what a wonderful lifelong gift we can give to them.

With our priorities on state testing scores, mounds of paperwork, and endless meetings, we forget the soul of our profession. Rogers said a teacher should help children "to be better than they might be, to be kind, to be open, and to use their imagination." He also said, "It's a privilege to be trusted by children. And I don't take it lightly." This last quote should be engraved 10 feet tall in front of every school.

Joe Santoro
Berkeley Springs, West Virginia

Let's Talk

Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of four ways:

- By mail: Write to Letters, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036
- Through the Web: Go to www.nea.org/neatoday, click on "Reader Services," and fill in the "Letter to the Editor" section.
- By e-mail: Write to neatoday@nea.org
- By fax: 202/822-7206

Letters are edited for length and clarity.

President's Viewpoint

BY REG WEAVER

Great Public Schools for Every Child

As public school teachers and education support professionals, we dedicate ourselves to the care and educating of America's students. But despite your best efforts, you and many of your colleagues feel you are being set up to fail.

I hear you loud and clear. In recent months, I have talked with hundreds of NEA members in schools across the country. Almost everywhere, I hear anxiety and, yes, anger about the new federal education law. It has a catchy and misleading name—the "No Child Left Behind Act"—but it is deeply flawed. This law will leave behind millions of children, while labeling many of our best public schools and most dedicated educators "failures."

It has a catchy and misleading name—"The No Child Left Behind Act"—but it is deeply flawed.

NEA has long supported the broad objectives of this legislation—to close the achievement gap, to guarantee a "highly qualified" teacher in every classroom—and we certainly strive to ensure that no child is left behind.

But there are serious problems with this law that go beyond the obvious lack of funding. The law sets unrealistic goals, and then directs us to meet these goals—or else. It is obsessed with tests, punishments, and labels.

We will not stand by while teachers, education support professionals, and America's children are hurt by the rhetoric of reform. Your Association is mobilizing at every level to make implementation of this law more reasonable, and to change provisions in the law that are clearly harmful.

We have met with Secretary of Education Rod Paige and others—hopefully our conversations will continue. I—along with our seasoned team of NEA lobbyists—will continue to meet with members of Congress to ensure that they are knowledgeable about the true impact of the law. We want to garner their support as we move to introduce, and hopefully pass, specific amendments to the law.

But I don't want you to be under any illusions. In Washington, many fiercely resist any changes. A top-down effort from NEA headquarters will not overcome this opposition. To succeed, we need a vast, grassroots effort involving millions of public educators and parents. A groundswell will not do—we need to create an earthquake! We need to channel our frustration into decisive political action.

And let us be clear about the changes we seek in the law. NEA members have identified the following top priorities:

We seek a moratorium on any testing, accountability, or educator-quality requirements that are not fully funded.

We want to require states and school districts to fully fund the costs of necessary training for paraprofessionals.

The law promises a "highly qualified teacher" in every classroom by 2006. We want our policy makers to acknowledge that we are the best persons to set the criteria for a "highly qualified teacher."

We want states to have flexibility in defining "adequate yearly progress" and in applying sanctions to schools deemed "in need of improvement."

In the months ahead, we need to keep up a relentless, tireless, full-court press to achieve these changes. I urge you to never, ever underestimate your power as an individual educator, and our power as a united Association. We are 2.7 million strong, but numbers alone, will not carry the day. We must be organized, mobilized, and energized at every level of our Association.

I call on each and every NEA member—I call on you—to become an active member. We are skilled educators and advocates. Let's use that skill to educate and activate our colleagues, families, friends, and elected officials. Let's demonstrate how an amended law can make "Great Public Schools for Every Child." I know I can count on you!

Comments? E-mail Reg Weaver at RegWeaver@nea.org.

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Great Public Schools for Every Child

Do these students have science down cold?

Mrs. Renz's fourth-graders know a thing or two about long-distance learning. Their teacher developed an exciting, technology-rich project that brought the wonders of Antarctica right into the classroom. Intel's education web site has a wide range of professional development programs designed to help engage your students through technology — not to mention programs that can teach you how to use it effectively. To find out more about these unique and free resources,

visit intel.com/education.

Intel® Teach to the Future offers free professional development on effectively integrating technology into your classroom.

Discover exciting professional resources like It's a Wild Ride, an interdisciplinary roller coaster design project.

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Thrown to the Wolves

A teacher survives an attack on his career and learns a lesson: In union, there is strength

BY JOHN FLICKINGER

I am named after my father. He is my hero. One night last February, he was sitting in his little, assisted-living apartment watching the news. He saw his son on TV. The newswoman made it clear that here was a guilty man. My father's feeble hands shook and his poor old heart broke.

January 6, 2003. I was excited to get back to my students after the Christmas break, and especially happy to be starting my yearly exploration of the mind of Henry David Thoreau. We began with *Civil Disobedience*.

Soon, my students' hatred for Thoreau's verbose 19th century style gave way to amazement at this brilliant intellect and his wonderful ideas. By the end of the week, fine young minds were interpreting the transcendental concepts of Henry David Thoreau, showing me things I had never thought of in all my years of teaching.

Photos by Fernando Garcia

John Flickinger spoke out to defend his students. Soon, it was Flickinger who needed defending.

Then along came A-B block scheduling. We were told that instead of seeing our students every day for 50 minutes, we would see them every other day for 90. Two teachers surveyed the faculty: 149 against, 13 for. We took the results and a stack of research showing the folly of block scheduling to the school board. Their reaction was a "so what" shrug. "We are placing you on block scheduling. End of discussion."

The next day, the teachers wore black ribbons mourning the death of site-based management. It was decisions made by people in the trenches that made Montwood a national Blue Ribbon school. And site-based management is mandated by our state education department. But A-B scheduling was a done deal.

My students asked, "What should we do?" Being a teacher, I answered their question with a question. "What does Thoreau say?"

They dug into *Civil Disobedience*. "It's not only our right but our responsibility to make our feelings known," they said. I was so proud of them.

Students and parents organized to express their opinions. Two meetings were called by the district and abruptly canceled. Then, I heard rumors of a student walkout. I wrote on my board, "No Walk-Out."

The next morning, 1,000 students left class and gathered in front of the school. They chanted and waved placards, peacefully expressing their dissatisfaction.

Panic stricken, the district called the police. A hundred riot gear-clad, helmet-wearing officers turned a peaceful protest into a riot. The smell of mace in the clear January air.

Afterwards, the superintendent told us this riot was "entirely the teachers' fault."

Why do politicians believe our youth are too dull-witted and morally slothful to understand a moral concept and act upon it? Perhaps they judge others by their own standards.

The next morning, I sent an e-mail praising the actions of 99.9 percent of our students. I blamed the incident on arrogant district officials.

Security showed up at my door. I was told to report to the principal's office. I smiled at my students and said, "Some things never change. The words 'report to the principal's office' still give me that 'Oh no, what did I do now?' feeling." The students laughed and I headed downstairs. I was suspended for improper use of district e-mail.

National attention was now focused on our school. A sacrifice was needed. One other teacher who stood up for our students and I were chosen.

That night, I was ambushed on my porch by a local TV station with ties to the district. I refused to speak. On the 10 o'clock news, there I was peeking out of my front door. "The teacher rumored to have incited the riot refused to speak to us." My e-mail was read, edited to sound like support for the riot and an appeal for more violence.

Then e-mails began to arrive from places like Stanford, MIT, Columbia, and Notre Dame, from my former students. "Emerson and Thoreau and their life-changing philosophy are the reason I am here today," they said.

At the next board meeting, a parent delivered a stack of letters testifying to the influence of my teaching. Parents and students held signs: "Give us back our teacher." I tried to hold back the tears. I failed.

When I am 80 years old and someone asks me what I did in life, I will remember those students holding those signs. I will straighten up and proudly say, "I was a teacher."

The powers that be threw two of us to the wolves. I was out in the cold among the hungry lupus. I survived because of my defenders. My first stop was the campus rep of the Texas State Teachers Association. A lawyer in Austin jumped on a plane and arrived in El Paso just in time to quietly take notes at the Friday night district meeting. He was noticed. At every meeting, people were there to support me. When I walked into a potential ambush by district officials, I was accompanied by two union representatives who have spent a lifetime protecting teachers. And today, I am back in the classroom teaching the lessons of the last month.

We have people running districts who only care about power. Join the union. The other teacher had no support and he is still sitting at home. Join the union and tell your peers to join. You never know who they will throw to the wolves next. It might be you. Join the union. ✔

John Flickinger teaches English at Montwood High School in El Paso, Texas.

This is the final issue of *NEA Today* for this school year. Now the *NEA Today* staff turns to gathering story ideas, casting the net widely for good material for next year's eight issues.

Many of our story ideas come from NEA members who pass along their suggestions via mail, e-mail, or phone call. (See page 3 for a list of ways to reach us.)

And the writers pick up many ideas while at school sites doing other stories. Other NEA staff are another good source of story suggestions as are state and local affiliates.

Bill Fischer
editor

In addition to gathering story ideas, we've enlisted the help of NEA Research and a national polling firm to conduct a nationwide telephone survey of NEA members to learn members' opinions of *NEA Today*.

The survey, which has been done nearly every year for the past 20, will help us identify the types of stories you'd like to see covered and which are of less interest to you.

For example, one survey question asks members to rank the following types of stories in order of importance to them:

- Federal and state education policy and laws
- Negotiating salaries, benefits, and workplace issues
- Professional development
- Race and the achievement gap
- Social issues affecting students
- Strategies to boost student achievement
- Student discipline and classroom management
- Technology
- Health care policy.

Other parts of the survey will ask NEA members how often they access information from the main NEA website, www.nea.org and *NEA Today* online, which contains the current issue, and archived material dating back to 1997.

Hearing from our members is important to us as we plan for next year. It's your magazine and your stories.

Bill Fischer

Layoffs: Our Role Isn't To Roll Over

NEA state affiliates fight for education funding, educate taxpayers about the impact of classroom cuts, and defend members' layoff and recall rights.

In the face of budget uncertainty, California's Alameda Unified School District has apparently decided it'll do without educators in the coming school year—and handed reduction in force (RIF) notices to all 635 of its teachers. But the California Teachers Association (CTA) isn't buying the district's poverty plea for a minute.

Alameda issued those pink slips smack in the middle of contract talks with its teachers. "There's no way on God's green earth this district could lay off every teacher!" points out CTA President Wayne Johnson. "This is just a bargaining posture, a way to win psychological advantage with teachers and the press and gain takebacks at the bargaining table."

CTA is rightfully skeptical, but it isn't blind to fiscal reality. The state of California faces a whopping $35 billion budget deficit, which has prompted cautious school districts to issue at least 18,000 RIF notices, with more on the way.

But when school districts exploit budget cutbacks—as in Alameda—or simply overreact to them, CTA and other NEA state affiliates pose extremely tough questions about the larger state budget picture, local budget priorities, and the rights front-line educators are accorded during the layoff and "bumping" process.

If you've never endured the stress generated by a RIF notice, you've probably never considered the unique role your Association plays during an economic crisis.

Fortunately, most states have found humane alternatives to educator RIFs during this, the worst round of budget deficits since World War II. But teachers or education support professionals (ESPs) in states such as Alabama, California, Kentucky, Illinois, and Oklahoma have or will soon face the reality of position cuts in their ranks.

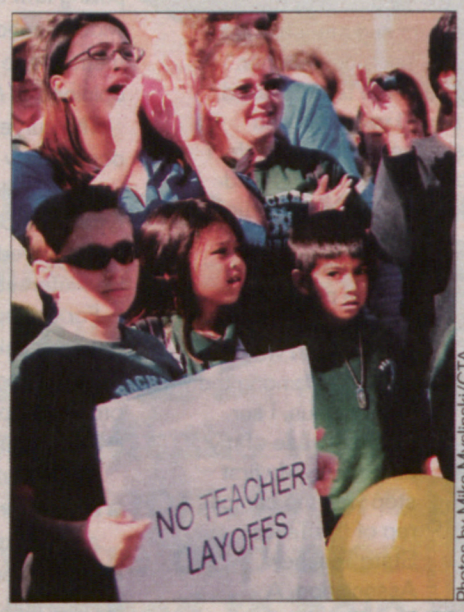
These educators are discovering that an NEA state affiliate can assist them by:

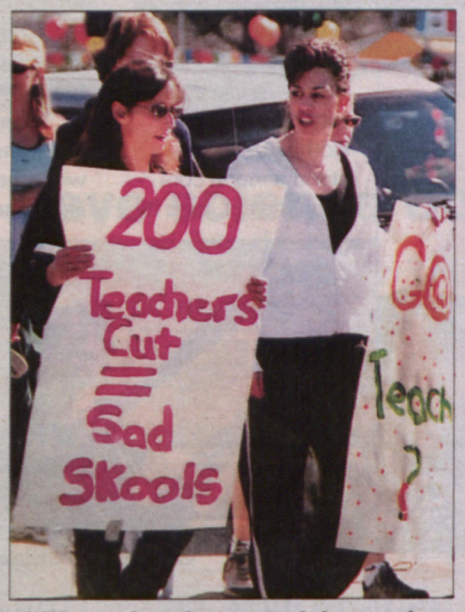
■ **Advocating for adequate state and local aid.** Although the California legislature has slashed $2.4 billion from public education funding, CTA—through aggressive lobbying and thousands of member e-mails and letters to lawmakers—has ensured that $2 billion of that cut will not impact school district budgets (thanks to deferred cutbacks or fund shifts).

And in Nebraska, where school shutdowns or program cuts have long generated reductions in force, the Nebraska State Education Association (NSEA) has earned a 71 percent success rate in persuading voters to "override" state property tax levy caps and save local schools—the very heart and soul of rural communities.

■ **Reaching out to the community.** Through statewide media spots and coalition work with other public education supporters—every group from the state PTA to ethnic organizations—CTA recently saved California's historic K-3 class size reduction law from being sliced away by scalpel-wielding legislators. In the same spirit, NSEA has "long communicated to parents how class size increases and program cuts significantly impact their kids," notes staffer Brian Mikkelsen.

NSEA uses public RIF hearings to educate both school board members





Photos by Mike Myslinski/CTA

Backed by parents and other allies, California NEA members have saved the state's class size reduction law from the axe and challenged teacher layoffs at every turn.

When They Look At Layoffs, Look At Their Books

When a school district targets front-line educators for layoffs without first examining its priorities—or its books—it's just *begging* for Association scrutiny.

"Laying off teachers will increase class sizes and not provide our students with the quality education they deserve," notes California Teachers Association President Wayne Johnson. "Districts should target budget cuts away from the classroom and professionals who work directly with students."

Too many California districts, Johnson charges, are addressing budget shortfalls by protecting "administrative bureaucracies" at the expense of front-line educators. "You haven't read many news stories about mass administrative layoffs," he says.

Nationally, Johnson adds, districts are spending an ever smaller slice of the budget pie on teachers. According to a 2001 survey completed by the American Federation of Teachers, teacher salaries today account for a smaller proportion of total education spending than they did 40 years ago—down from 50.9 percent in 1960-61 to 39.5 percent in 2000-01.

Jerry Jones, a retired Nebraska State Education Association UniServ Director, who analyzes annual district financial reports for NSEA in five-year sequences, sees this trend at work in the Cornhusker State. "I discover that in most cases, not all, teacher salaries as a percentage of available funds are going down over the years, with more funds being put in reserve," he reports.

Other trends? "Most districts overestimate expenditures and underestimate receipts and the amount of money left over at the end of the year," Jones says.

So aside from the mattress, just where is that money going? In at least one Nebraska district, Jones sighs, "it's legal fees—the attorney makes more than the superintendent."

School board members aren't professional educators and rely on what administrators tell them about district expenses, Jones concludes. "Often they don't know these kinds of numbers until the Association represents members at a RIF hearing!"

Advice to school board members everywhere: Learn some accounting or be held to account.

—*D.W.*

and the larger community about the human cost of proposed staff cutbacks. NSEA attorney Scott Norby insists he stands a better chance of reversing a RIF decision through "political" pressure, "like when a school board looks out over a gymnasium full of 'patrons' who don't want the elimination of a teacher or program."

■ **Defending members' RIF rights.** In California, CTA provides free legal support for any member who receives a RIF notice, including representation before an administrative law judge. And in Nebraska, NSEA automatically represents members at public RIF hearings, where district administrators must prove, among other things, that they have objective written RIF criteria and

"When educators facing layoffs are really scared, I tell them to stop and think: 'There are 2.7 million NEA members, and they're all standing behind you. You have a lot of support out there.'"

—Nebraska UniServ Director Ellen Yates

can prove a "change in circumstances" that justifies an individual's RIF.

"No matter *where* you are in the country, you should know what your rights are in a layoff. They might be found under state law or even in negotiated contract language," advises UniServ Director Marcus Albrecht, who currently handles RIF cases in Illinois. "And post-layoff factors you need to consider include continued insurance coverage, unemployment insurance paid back to the first day of your claim, and payment for unused vacation, personal, and sick days."

■ **Providing moral support.** "If you're not an Association member, RIF hearing representation isn't cheap; you'll pay $200 per hour for an attorney in Nebraska," notes NSEA Director of Member Rights Trish Guinan. "NSEA members, however, get free representation from trained UniServ staff, *plus* the moral support of our local affiliates. It's not uncommon for locals to babysit for teachers during their RIF hearings, shovel their snow, or take them to dinner when they're really stressed." ✔

—Dave Winans

[KEEP YOUR EYE ON. . .]

. . . **changes in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).** NEA has been working with Congress to ensure that teacher and ESP voices are heard during the current process to "reauthorize"—revise and improve—IDEA. NEA's message to Congress: Refocus IDEA on student achievement, not on paperwork and process.

NEA is urging federal lawmakers to act on these key Association priorities: make full IDEA funding mandatory, increase dollars for professional development, improve working conditions by reducing paperwork and caseload burdens, expand early intervention efforts, amend IDEA's discipline provisions to enhance school safety, and defeat voucher proposals.

And NEA's message to you: Don't wait until the IDEA reauthorization bill has passed to let Congress know how you feel IDEA should be improved—go to the NEA Legislative Action Center at www.nea.org/lac. To receive IDEA updates, send your e-mail address to NEA staffer Patti Ralabate at pralabate@nea.org.

. . . the **115-member Bow (New Hampshire) Education Association (BEA),** which has been engaged in a long, grueling campaign to win contract language specifying that teachers shall only be disciplined for "just cause"—a right already enshrined in 74 percent of NEA-New Hampshire's (NEA-NH) local agreements.

At present, "we have almost no protection from the whim of administrators or backlash from angry parents," says **BEA President Kathryn Ford.** "We want it in writing that all administrators will agree to treat all bargaining unit members *fairly and equally.*"

BEA members may only grieve issues specifically addressed in the current master agreement. That, says Ford, leaves teachers unprotected when administrators intimidate, show favoritism, insert unsubstantiated complaints in personnel files, "pressure" teachers over renewals/nonrenewals, or make "inconsistent observations" of teacher work.

NEA-New Hampshire has filed two unfair labor practice charges against the Bow district school board for improperly attempting to influence the bargaining process, both among nonnegotiating BEA members and local residents.

Ford says the board is bent on retaining unfettered "management rights" and fears that "just cause" language will lead to more grievances. "Our negotiators keep saying," she points out, "that this language will lead to grievances only if administrators are unfair or capricious in their dealings with the professionals who teach the children of the district."

In an escalating crisis campaign, BEA members have been reaching out to parents and the press, wearing "No Contract is No Solution" buttons, engaging in informational picketing (even in sub-zero winter weather), entering and leaving schools each day as a group, and refusing voluntary evening activities.

Bow teachers have received bargaining and communications support from NEA-NH staff and leaders, and "we have received many phone calls of encouragement from parents," reports **BEA Negotiations Chair Paula Bailey.** "Even better, parents have stopped to picket with us and contacted board members to express their dismay over this impasse."

The stakes for BEA members in this battle intensified at press time. The New Hampshire state legislature was about to pass a bill that abolishes binding arbitration for any grievance "resulting from non-renewal." That legislation will "make it easier to fire teachers during this time of teacher shortages—that's scary," concludes Bailey.

For more information, contact Kathryn Ford at kford@bownet.org or visit the BEA website at www.bownet.org/bea.

. . . the **22 paraeducator members of the Lamoille (Vermont) Union High School Education Association (LUHEA),** who have ratified a three-year contract that includes 21 percent in "new money" in the first year, 4.5 percent raises in both the second and third years, and an "agency fee" for non-members who enjoy the fruits of union representation.

Carol Carstarphen

Led by local President Kathryn Ford, foreground, NEA members in Bow, New Hampshire, picket for contract language that requires fairness in discipline.

The agreement, signed in March, provides hourly raises ranging from $1 to $7 in the first year, pays tuition for one three-credit college course per year, and bumps up either the second- or the third-year raise—from 4.5 percent to 6 percent—for a para who completes a college course with at least a B average.

In bargaining last year, other Lamoille education support professionals (ESPs) set a strong precedent for the para contract. But it was new-member organizing—bringing 86 percent of the paras into the Association—and the smart work of **negotiating team members Shelley Jones, Darcey Fletcher, and Rita Graves** that made the ultimate difference.

Vermont-NEA (VT-NEA) UniServ Director Suzanne Dirmaier, who only sat in for the last hour of contract talks, points out that the para negotiators did their own economic research and displayed "self-reliance, assertiveness, and self-esteem" at the table.

Shelley Jones credits the team's success to skills gained at VT-NEA training sessions and regional bargaining council meetings—where negotiators compare settlements and tactics—and the full support of LUHEA teacher leaders.

Helping it all come together, Jones quickly adds, was a good working relationship with school board negotiators.

Most importantly, this ESP leader concludes, "we proved that with large numbers of Association members, a school board is willing to listen to you. Without those numbers and the support of Vermont-NEA, we would still be making the minimum wage."

Use My Story, But Not My Name

Colombian education unionists tell foreign visitors—including an NEA representative—of threats, murders, and kidnappings in their ranks.

When American teachers tell "war stories," they're likely to talk about unruly students or obnoxious administrators. When teachers in Colombia tell such stories, they speak of real bullets.

Last year, no fewer than 82 members of Colombia's largest educators' union, the Federación Colombiana de Educadoras, were assassinated. That crisis prompted the union to organize a February forum in Bogotá for visitors from NEA and Education International, the world alliance of educators' unions.

Noma

Colombian educators packed a small meeting room to tell the foreign delegation what civil war has done to them, their families, and their work. No one wanted their names or photos used, because publication could bring death.

One educator from northern Colombia said he saw right-wing gunmen kill two teachers last October. Because this teacher is a potential witness, his name is now on the death list. The list is well-known in the area—his position is number 10.

This educator was also abruptly fired after he and a priest tried to organize a community meeting against the violence.

Another speaker said her brother was murdered for union activity. Then her partner was killed in front of her eight-year-old son. As a witness, the eight-year-old was added to the death list—that's when this mother decided to leave the area.

Most of the violence is happening in rural areas, so victims seek refuge in the cities, reports Jill Christianson of the NEA Office of International Relations, who was part of the delegation.

The worst perpetrators, the guests were told, are right-wing paramilitaries connected to elements of the government. But left-wing guerrillas are also responsible for some attacks.

Schools and teachers are caught in the crossfire because both sides want to recruit students and because teachers are community leaders, Christianson says. "One older man," she reports, "talked about his three daughters. The guerrillas kidnapped his oldest daughter, and by the time they let her go, she had developed serious psychological problems.

"Then they took his second daughter," Christianson adds. "She came back brainwashed, a guerrilla herself. Finally they phoned to demand his third daughter. He fled to Bogotá."

Education International and NEA are providing immediate help to displaced workers. NEA is working with the Colombian union to advocate for government protection of threatened workers and for their safe return home.

"There are no simple answers in Colombia, but I hope we can at least alleviate some of the difficulties of these educators—after they've survived so much," says Christianson.

The trip was organized in response to a 2002 NEA Representative Assembly new business item that called for the Association to inform members about the plight of Colombian educators and work with Education International to help the victims. Also as part of this response, Wisconsin NEA members Robert Fullmer and Glenn Schmidt visited Colombia in March on a fact-finding trip organized by the AFL-CIO. ✔

—Alain Jehlen

For more: Contact the NEA Office of International Relations, oir@nea.org.

STATE AFFILIATE NEWS

New Mexico Educators Gain Bargaining Rights

■ In March, **New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson** signed legislation that restores and extends bargaining for 30,000 New Mexico school employees. **NEA-New Mexico** (NEA-NM) leaders and members worked closely with the governor, legislators, and other groups to craft this bill, which makes collective bargaining rights permanent for all public employees.

The new law—the last bargaining statute expired in 1999—provides for binding arbitration in the event of an impasse in contract negotiations, reinstates a state labor relations board, and provides an opportunity for educators to discuss and reach agreement over instructional issues.

"This law will benefit all of New Mexico's children by giving a greater voice to the people who work with them closely every day," says NEA President Reg Weaver. "It provides a great framework for public schools and education employees to reach agreements that will raise student achievement across the state."

Marguerite Kearns, NEA-NM

New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson signs a public employee bargaining law.

"This is the culmination of our success in electing people who believe public school employees should have an equal voice in matters that not only affect our working conditions, but students' learning conditions," adds NEA-NM President Eduardo Holguin.

■ In late winter, members of the **Colorado Education Association** (CEA) and **MEA-MFT in Montana** joined with public education supporters in mass rallies for adequate state funding.

Colorado members rallied in Denver to reaffirm support for constitutional Amendment 23, which, among other things, links per-pupil spending to the rate of inflation and designates a portion of income tax revenue to the State Education Fund. That measure has boosted the state from 45th to 41st place in school aid to schools.

In Montana, MEA-MFT members and others gathered in nine regional rallies. Their key message: Montanans want adequate funding for preK-graduate school education, and they want legislators to raise revenues to pay for it. "To do otherwise would be to sacrifice our kids to a short-term fix," declared state Rep. Brad Newman.

Preventing Medical Errors

NEA and the AFT team up to address troubling healthcare issue.

When 17-year-old Jesica Santillan died Feb. 22 after receiving transplanted organs with the wrong blood type, her death made headlines across the country. But the same day, with little or no publicity, about 250 other people also died in U.S. hospitals as the result of medical errors—mistakes which, like the one that killed Santillan, could have been prevented.

Between 44,000 and 98,000 people die each year because of medical errors during hospitalizations, according to a 1999 report from the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. Even at the low end of that range, the report noted, those numbers make medical errors the nation's eighth leading cause of death, slightly ahead of car accidents.

The report outlined some relatively simple improvements that could dramatically cut the error rate. "It would be irresponsible to expect anything less than a 50 percent reduction in errors over five years," the report noted.

That was more than three years ago. Has anything changed? "We've seen pockets of dramatic improvement," says Donald Berwick, a pediatrician and president of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement and one of the report's authors. "Some of the hospitals we work with have had tenfold reductions in adverse drug events. But overall, we're a long way from the goal. We're still building the will for change, and we're working to alter some deeply ingrained behaviors and attitudes in the healthcare system."

Fighting medical errors is one of the projects of the NEAFT Partnership Joint Council. The NEA and AFT are members of the Leapfrog Group, a coalition of more than 130 public and private organizations that sponsor healthcare benefit plans. The Leapfrog Group promotes three reforms that could reduce the death toll by more than 50 percent—or over 100 lives a day:

- Get doctors to stop scribbling prescriptions on slips of paper and start using computers equipped with error prevention software that flags those which may contain mistakes.
- Refer patients who need certain complex procedures to hospitals that offer the best chance of survival.
- Staff intensive care units with doctors who have credentials in critical care medicine.

How can NEA and AFT affect hospital policies? One way is through collective bargaining. The two unions have so far trained about 400 of their negotiators on medical errors and the Leapfrog reforms. These negotiators, responsible for well over 1,000 labor agreements, can push school districts to use the Leapfrog ideas as criteria for choosing healthcare providers for employees.

In Wisconsin, WEA Trust, a nonprofit organization created by the NEA-affiliated Wisconsin Education Association Council to provide insurance and other services for school employees, joined a local Leapfrog group that has started putting hospital safety data on the Web. "That was quite controversial at first," says WEA Trust Executive Director Al Jacobs. "The hospitals were not happy." Jacobs concedes that the statistics are far from perfect as measures of hospital quality, but he says a University of Oregon study showed that hospitals whose data are published make greater efforts to improve.

"Very often the front-line healthcare professionals are blamed for these medical errors. But changing the system is what is needed to reduce the number of errors," says Candice Owley, chair of the AFT's healthcare division. ✔

This article, the third in a series on healthcare issues and how they affect educators, is a project of the NEAFT Partnership. A primary aim of the partnership is to keep members of both unions informed about joint programs and activities in areas of common concern. NEA staff writer Alain Jehlen wrote this article, which also appears in the May-June issue of *American Teacher*.

School nurses stretched thin

A public school may not be as dangerous as a hospital intensive care unit, but medical errors can happen there, too. In a survey of more than 600 school nurses conducted by University of Iowa professor Ann Marie McCarthy, half of the nurses reported medical errors at their schools during the past year. Although most errors were missed doses, there also were significant numbers of overdoses and wrong medications.

The National Association of School Nurses recommends one nurse for every 750 students, but McCarthy reported that the actual student/nurse ratio is almost twice that.

Meanwhile, "inclusion" has brought more students who need sophisticated medical support into the schools. McCarthy's survey found that more than 5 percent of students take medication, and 75 percent of medications are given to students by someone other than a school nurse.

That can be dangerous, says Carolyn Seifert, a registered nurse at Lake Silver Elementary School in Orlando, Florida, and a member of the Florida Education Association, a joint NEA-AFT state affiliate. Two years ago, she noticed something strange about a medicine tablet she was about to give a third-grader. It didn't look right—and it wasn't. The child's mother had put her husband's powerful heart medication in the boy's bottle by mistake. Giving a small child an adult dose of the heart drug could have stopped his heart, says Seifert. And someone with less training might not have noticed. According to the Iowa State survey, errors were three times more likely when someone other than a nurse administered the medication.

Joanne Carole

School nurse Carolyn Seifert says students these days have more sophisticated medical needs that require the skills of trained nurses.

"Sometimes," says Seifert, "a para doesn't want to give out medication because she's fearful of making a mistake, but the principal says, 'Do it.' The principal may not like it, either, but he knows the parents want the medication to be given in school." The solution, she says, would be to hire more school nurses, but with budget cuts and new mandates to raise test scores, she doesn't see that happening soon.

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High-Stakes Tests Spawn High-Stakes Lawsuits

Teachers fired, sued for revealing test questions, while a testing company agrees to pay $12 million for faulty scoring.

James Hope just wanted to warn parents that the new high-stakes test was unfair. But when this NEA member and Teacher of the Year posted six test questions on a parents' website, along with his criticisms that the test covered material that had not been taught, his school district charged him with violating the state Code of Ethics for Educators. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) agreed and voted last year to suspend Hope's teaching license.

But with the help of the Georgia Association of Educators, Hope appealed the proposed suspension. Last December, Fulton County Judge Gail Tusan exonerated him of any wrongdoing.

The court ruled that the ethics code only prohibits teachers from helping students cheat by providing them with test questions prior to administering the test. Hope didn't do that, the court said.

After a three-year odyssey, the case ended in January, when the Georgia Court of Appeals refused to overturn the trial court's decision. Hope is still teaching fourth grade in Gwinnett County.

Some other recent challenges to flaws in the high-stakes testing process:

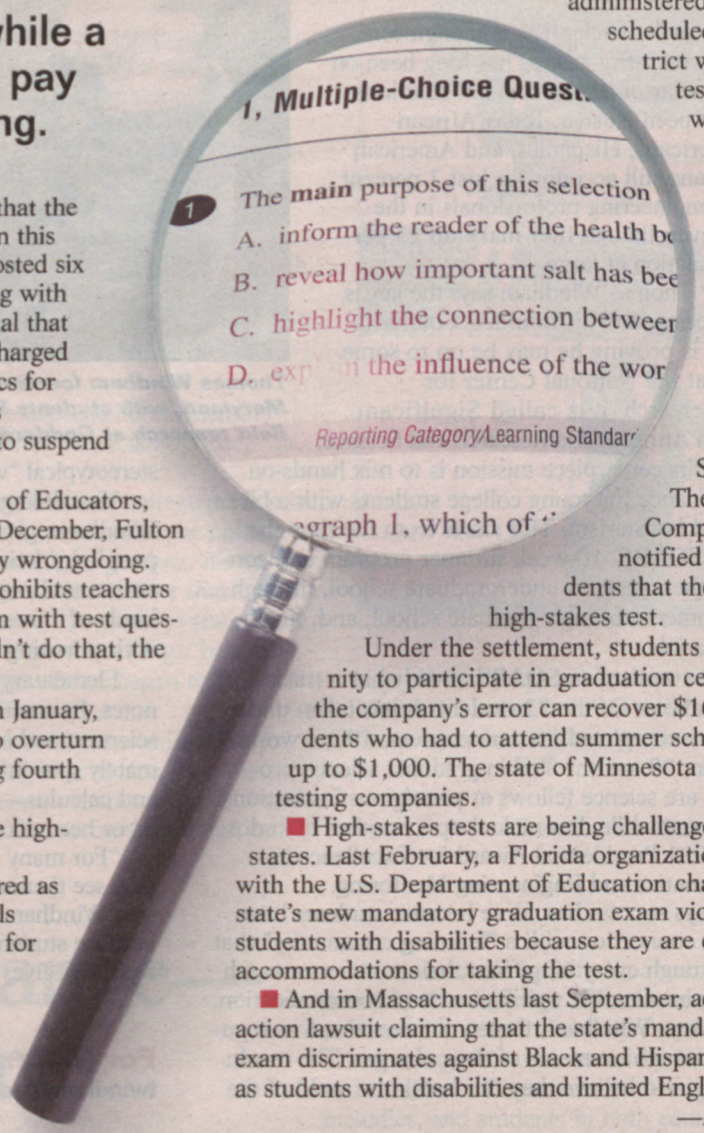
■ Chicago teacher George Schmidt hasn't fared as well as James Hope. The Chicago Public Schools (CPS) fired and then sued him for $1.4 million for publishing parts of the Chicago Academic Standards Examinations (CASE) in 1999.

Schmidt had criticized the CASE tests for sloppy wording and inaccurate answers.

Last December, a federal district court ruled that Schmidt's publication violated the CPS's copyright to the tests and enjoined him from publishing any copyrighted school district materials. In February, CPS stipulated that Schmidt owed only $500 for the copyright violation. Nevertheless, Schmidt has appealed the case to the federal circuit court.

Schmidt's termination for insubordination was upheld by a state board hearing officer, however, and his appeal to state court is still pending.

■ Meanwhile, a group of Chicago teachers threatened last fall to boycott the CASE tests, calling them "flawed and invalid." CPS announced last December that it had decided that the CASE tests would not be administered in January as scheduled, but that the district would develop new tests better aligned with state standards.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■ In Minnesota, a testing company agreed last November to pay up to $12 million to settle a class action lawsuit alleging that it wrongly scored thousands of the Minnesota Basic Skills Tests in 2000. The National Computer Systems falsely notified some 8,000 students that they had failed the high-stakes test.

Under the settlement, students denied the opportunity to participate in graduation ceremonies because of the company's error can recover $16,000, while students who had to attend summer school are eligible for up to $1,000. The state of Minnesota has since switched testing companies.

■ High-stakes tests are being challenged in two other states. Last February, a Florida organization filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education charging that the state's new mandatory graduation exam violates the rights of students with disabilities because they are denied adequate accommodations for taking the test.

■ And in Massachusetts last September, advocates filed a class action lawsuit claiming that the state's mandatory graduation exam discriminates against Black and Hispanic students, as well as students with disabilities and limited English proficiency. ✔

—Michael D. Simpson
NEA Office of General Counsel

New Federal Rules Support School Prayer

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) recently issued a new set of federal guidelines requiring school districts to allow students and teachers to engage in religious activities at school, including prayer.

Districts that violate the new rules—or fail to promise in writing that they will comply with the guidelines—risk the loss of federal education funds.

Development of the ED guidance, which was released on February 7, 2003, was mandated by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act.

In announcing the new rules, ED Secretary Rod Paige warned that "public schools should not be hostile to the religious rights of their students and their families."

Among other things, the guidelines state that "students may read their Bibles or other scriptures, say grace before meals, and pray or study religious materials with fellow students during recess, the lunch hour or other noninstructional time..."

The guidance cautions teachers not to discriminate against students who "express their beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments." It also advises that, in certain circumstances, schools may have to grant parental requests to "excus[e] students from class" for religious reasons.

The guidance counsels that teachers and other school employees, "when acting in their official capacities as representatives of the state," cannot encourage or participate in prayer activities with students. Before school or during lunch, however, school employees are free to meet with other employees for prayer or Bible study.

The guidelines also address student religious clubs, moments of silence, graduation prayer, and baccalaureate ceremonies.

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, charges that ED is dispensing faulty legal advice. The new rules, Lynn claims, "are based on a biased reading of the law [and are] intended to advance inappropriate religious activities in public schools."

The guidance is posted on ED's website at www.ed.gov/inits/religionandschools/prayer_guidance.html.

—M.D.S.

Want To Be a Scientist?

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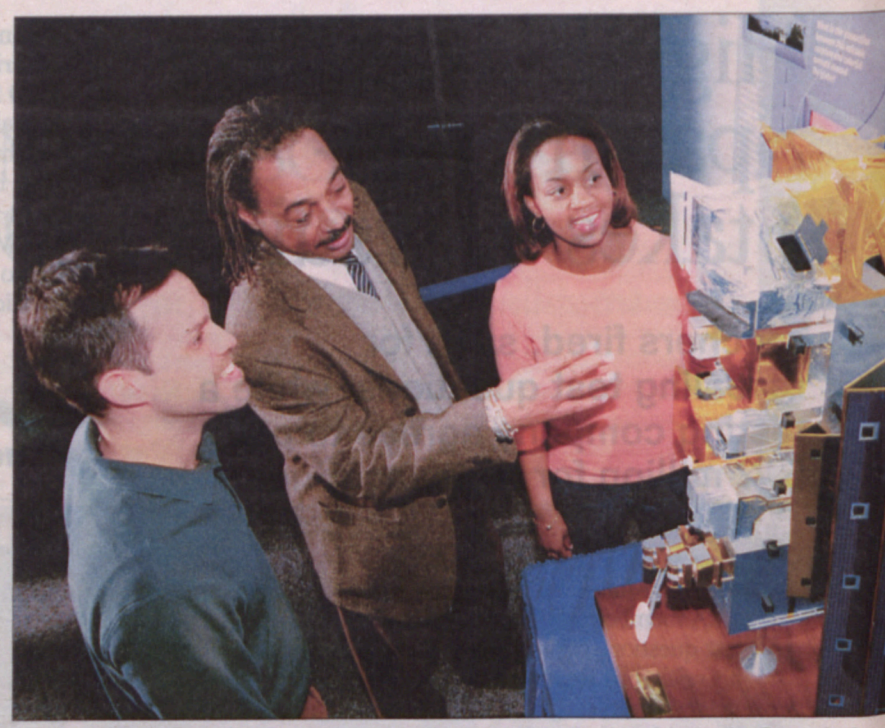


Thomas Windham (center) meets at the Goddard Space Center in Greenbelt, Maryland, with students Segayle Walford, who was mentored while doing field research at Goddard, and Ernesto Acevado Muñoz.

The dearth of scientists and engineers from minority groups has long been on the radar of academics, but solutions have been elusive. Today African-Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians still account for just 7 percent of science and engineering professionals in the United States, even though they make up 25 percent of the population at large.

What to do? Thomas Windham says the key is long-term mentoring, and his Boulder, Colorado-based program is proving he may be on to something. Housed at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, it is called Significant Opportunities in Atmospheric Research and Science, or SOARS, and its centerpiece mission is to mix hands-on professional guidance for young college students with a bit of love, caring, and boosterism. This starts from the time the "protégés" join SOARS' 10-week summer program and continues through their years in undergraduate school, through subsequent summers, through graduate school, and, finally, until they snag a job.

Now in its seventh year, SOARS already has a track record to crow about: Of the 72 students it has taken under its wing, 16 have completed master's degrees, 10 are working in the profession, 28 are enrolled in graduate science programs and four are science fellows at prestigious institutions. The program, meanwhile, has racked up a number of kudos, including the 2001 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring.

Windham says success has come because students have forged a lasting connection with a "learning community" that guides them through everything from their summer research to skill-building in scientific writing and oral communication. Along the way, says Windham, these volunteer mentors regularly celebrate the achievements of their charges. The result: the students begin to believe they can break the mold of the stereotypical "white, male, middle-aged scientist with glasses."

Visualizing themselves in the role can be a hurdle, notes Windham, given minorities' "almost nonexistent access to people in their communities" who make their living as scientists and engineers. To these students, he says, "those kinds of careers aren't 'real,' and the rewards that come with pursuing that educational track aren't obvious."

Elementary and secondary school educators can help, he notes, by creatively encouraging an early understanding of the sciences, and a consideration of professions that would ultimately spur interest in essential classes like chemistry, physics, and calculus—classes many minorities have historically avoided or been counseled to avoid.

"For many students, a choice doesn't become real until they see themselves as being eligible to act on it successfully," says Windham. "Mentoring can have tremendous impact, because students gain experiences and insights that help them see themselves as achievers—and in careers outside the NBA."

—Marilyn Milloy

For More: Contact Thomas Windham at twindham@ucar.edu or visit www.ucar.edu/soars.

Minding the Store

David Smith

Rose Scott sits with two of her students in their classroom store.

For students deemed "trainable mentally handicapped," classroom work often requires a strong emphasis on occupational and independent living skills. At Lumberton High School in Lumberton, North Carolina, special education teacher Rose Scott is fostering those skills in a unique way.

She has transformed her classroom into a bustling store called "Buried Treasure," where Lumberton students and their families stop in to buy snacks, greeting cards, and other items, many donated by the community. The store is staffed and managed entirely by Scott's students.

"Skills that come naturally to most people—comparison shopping, cooking, cleaning, locating a doctor, using a phone book—are very critical for these students if they are to be independent," says Scott. She says her teacher assistant thought a store would be an effective and fun way to teach those skills and decided to "make it happen."

Scott sought, and received, funding from the county Exceptional Children's Department and donations from parents and local businesses. The store became so successful it began earning a profit, which Scott now uses to fund an annual trip for her students—and to restock the store. Scott also teaches her students skills such as cooking and banking. She operates an in-class bank, and each of her students has an interest-bearing account.

According to Scott, about 75 percent of the students who enroll in her class end up better prepared to step into the world after graduation. "The skills they learn enable them to function as normally as possible and to work in a variety of positions," says Scott. "One of my former students currently works part-time at Dairy Queen! The hands-on learning these students experience forever changes their lives."

—Linda Powell

For More: Contact Rose Scott at Lumberton Senior High School, 910/671-6050.

Charles Votaw

Professional Development in the Virtual Age

Computer and Internet technology advances bring amazing new interactive tools each year. But imagine this: A teacher goes online to run professional development software tailored to local, state, and federal curriculum requirements. The teacher views videos of teachers demonstrating best practices for any subject, studies content for required curricula, takes informal quizzes, and enters chat rooms to talk to other local teachers who are studying the same materials.

This scenario is not a vision for the future. It's happening today in school districts around the country, spurred on by a partnership between NEA and Teachscape, a professional development company.

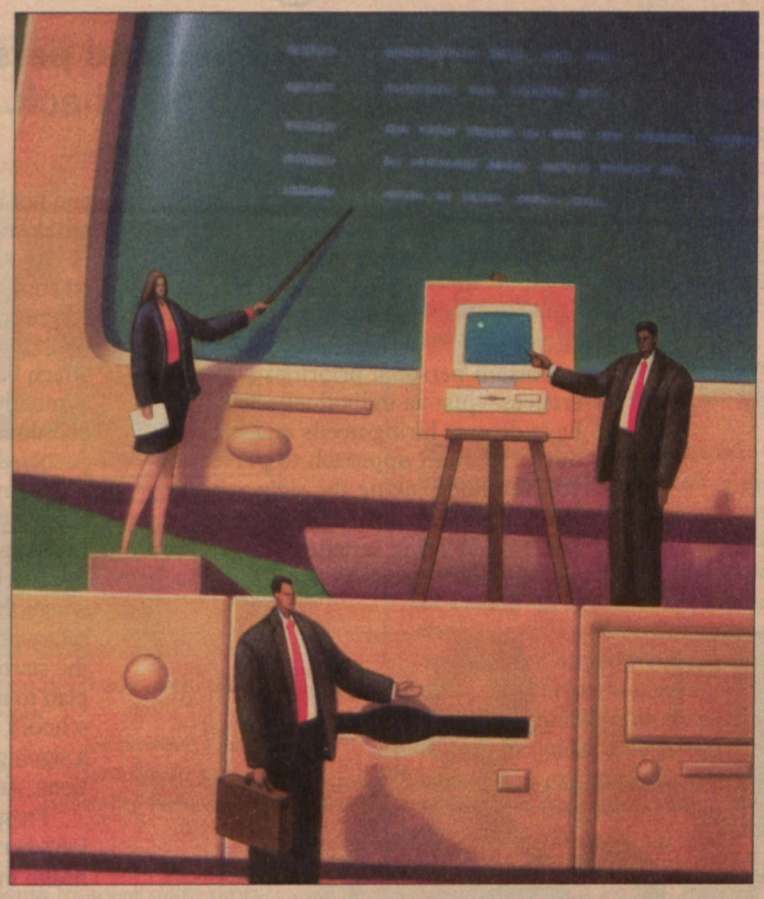
NEA staffer June VanderVeen says the Association got involved after hearing from members that "meaningful" professional development was a priority. "With Teachscape," she says, "we felt we had found a group that was deeply committed to creating quality learning experiences for teachers."

"It's a true breakthrough," says Audrey Soglin, a fifth-grade math teacher in Evanston, Illinois, who is one of the teachers featured in Teachscape's Web-based program. "They've harnessed computer and communications technology to make it serve the specific needs of teachers in any community."

Soglin was approached by Teachscape because her elementary school math curriculum emphasized algebra, which is important for meeting content standards in Evanston.

"They came in, filmed my classes, and then had college math professors interview me about my teaching techniques and the curriculum," says Soglin. "When you see the final edited product, it's very impressive because it stays focused on the subject matter that teachers really need for professional development." Soglin says she wishes she'd had access to such tools when she started teaching, "because I learned math in a very traditional way, and when I began to teach, I needed a great deal of help with content."

Paul Hansen, a 33-year veteran teacher who now trains other teachers in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, by using Teachscape, says the program is helping Milwaukee public schools maintain an 85 to 90 percent teacher retention rate. "Not only does it cover content, he says, "but it helps new teachers learn the critical skill of establishing classroom routines." And as a "priceless bonus," he notes teachers learn computer skills, a professional necessity.



Steve Kropp

—Matt Simon

For More: E-mail June VanderVeen at jvanderveen@nea.org.

A *Jazzy* Exchange—Across Cultures

Jazz compositions by students in the United States and Vietnam are commingling on the Web and in classrooms on both sides of the Atlantic, thanks to an innovative cultural exchange program developed by NEA member Leland Hauslein.

Hauslein, an instrumental music teacher at Richboro Middle School in Richboro, Pennsylvania, created the Vietnam Jazz Project after the music supervisor of the Council Rock School District, Carol Barrows, visited the Hanoi Conservatory of Music and discovered a great interest in jazz there. Hauslein's own students study jazz in-depth and Barrows' idea of a joint project really appealed to him.

Initially, Hauslein contacted the Hanoi Conservatory, and students exchanged videos of jazz performances. But he wanted the cultural exchange to be more educational for everyone involved, so he applied for and received a grant from The NEA Foundation to expand the project. Hauslein used the grant money to purchase advanced music composition software and to conduct trainings on its use in three different schools.

Erin Marie Day

Leland Hauslein says his students learned valuable music composition skills during a cultural exchange program he created.

"Our students know a lot about jazz, but many of them were intimidated by the challenge of music composition," says Hauslein. "Modern software can help immensely if you know the fundamentals of music." To encourage his students to try, he created a contest between his school and the Hanoi Conservatory. "We took traditional Vietnamese folk melodies, and students in both countries set out to turn them into jazz."

The results far exceeded Hauslein's expectations. "I knew our students could compose, but I was stunned by the polished, finished nature of their compositions," says Hauslein. Ten students, some working together, completed jazz compositions, and many others have works in progress.

Hauslein was also amazed at the unique sound of Vietnamese jazz. "It had all the musical progressions you associate with jazz, but the instruments and style were unmistakably Asian," he says. "I love listening to the compositions over and over again."

Jazz pieces by both American and Vietnamese students are posted at the project's website, www.crsd.org, and students in both countries have studied each other's compositions at length. Hauslein says his students are thrilled by the exposure. "But most important, they've grown in confidence because they know they can compose good music."

—M.S.

For More: E-mail Leland Hauslein at lhauslein@crsd.org. To apply for a grant today, contact The NEA Foundation at www.nfie.org.

Landing That First Job

Planning, preparation, and persistence can snag you that primo paycheck.

Any education student eager to begin a teaching career might occasionally think, "I'll take any job, anywhere." Realistically, though, all teachers have important personal priorities and preferences—just as individual schools have diverse hiring needs and procedures. A smart approach to presenting yourself and picking the right school will make a big difference in getting hired—and being satisfied with the job you choose.

Dan Loftin

Nicole Kendall turned to her NEA state affiliate for help with her job hunt.

The question of where to apply requires careful attention, because schools and the jobs they offer differ greatly.

After Nicole Kendall graduated from college in rural Tennessee, she knew she wanted to teach in an urban setting. But she didn't know where to apply. So Kendall, a fourth-grade teacher at Sylvan Park Elementary School in Nashville, turned to her state Association for advice.

"A lot of times when you're applying in the summer, you're not aware of a school's climate," says Kendall, currently in her third year of teaching. "So I called some members of the Tennessee Education Association and got their advice. They gave me some insight about principals and school atmospheres."

Prospective teachers should start their job searches early, says Jessica Rettler, a fourth-grade teacher at Tri-County Elementary School in Plainfield, Wisconsin. Rettler, now in her third year of teaching, started asking about job opportunities during her student teaching assignment. She secured a position in a neighboring district by the time she graduated. But prospective teachers shouldn't feel pressured to accept the first job offer they receive, she adds.

Instead, new teachers should ask themselves what they need out of a job and not remake themselves for just one job posting.

Another important step is to become an educated reader of salary schedules. "If you're comparing two job openings, it's tempting to place too much emphasis on which has the higher starting salary," says Kimberly Anderson, Student Program coordinator for the Virginia Education Association.

Many districts promote teacher retention by paying higher salaries after about five years, Anderson says. So, if prospective teachers are looking for a community where they can settle down, the long-term salary potential is more important than the starting salary. By contrast, if they plan to move every few years, then a school's starting salary or whether it offers a signing bonus are important considerations, Anderson adds.

Prospective teachers should weigh a job's benefits the same way. "A good health insurance package for you and your family might make up for a low starting salary," Anderson says. New teachers also should find out if their school or district reimburses expenses for any continuing education required by the state.

Working conditions at a school also are important—especially for someone just breaking into the profession.

"A new teacher needs as much support and planning time as possible," says Anderson. "Find out if there's a mentoring program, and, if so, how much time is available for working with a mentor."

New teachers shouldn't underestimate the value of a supportive administrator, either, says Kendall. After her first year of teaching, Kendall learned that her middle school was being consolidated with another school in the district and she needed to find a new position. Kendall enjoyed working with her principal. So when the principal transferred to an elementary school, Kendall applied for a job at that school and transferred as well.

Start the job search early, says Wisconsin's Jessica Rettler.

Prospective teachers also need to consider how they present themselves to potential employers. "You obviously want your strengths to outweigh your weaknesses," says Nancy Clark, Student Program coordinator for the Wisconsin Education Association Council. "Look through your whole college experience and identify what you've gained that is marketable, from mastery of content to foreign language skills or working with special needs children."

The final key is persistence.

"If you like several schools, send out as many résumés as you wish," says Fran Pierce, Student Program coordinator for the Pennsylvania State Education Association. "On the other hand, if you're set on one school, don't stop with sending a résumé. Go to the school, check for job postings on their bulletin board, and ask if your application is up to date. Look for ways to meet with the principal."

Kendall says that it's important, too, to remain flexible in your persistence.

"The more flexible you are, the more you learn about what you can offer," she says. "You may not get the job assignment you're looking for, but that exposure may open up other opportunities." ✔

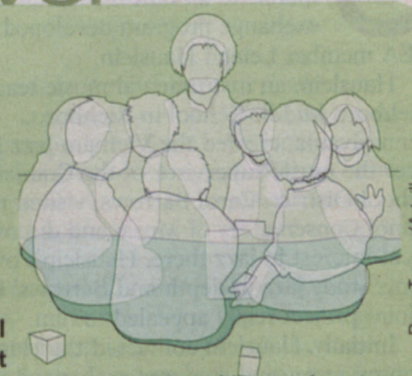
—Matt Simon

Nobody Ever Told Me

Culture Shock

After graduating from college and spending a semester substitute teaching, I left my home in Indiana to accept a position at a school in Chandler, Arizona. My most embarrassing moment occurred mainly because I had relocated from an entirely different region of the country. In Indiana, I taught a diverse population of students, but did not encounter as many Native American students as I found in my class in Arizona. During one lesson in my new school, I wanted all of my students to come and sit in a circle on the floor. So, drawing on what I had heard as a child and what I heard other teachers say, I asked the children to sit "Indian style" on the floor. I received nothing but blank stares from the children. I soon realized what a politically incorrect request I had made. From that day forward, sitting "criss-cross" became a new part of my vocabulary.

Amy Croston, second-grade teacher, Christiansburg, Virginia



Ross Trower/Artville

[DILEMMA]

How do you keep your students focused at the end of the year?

I give each student a raffle ticket. If the student behaves, he or she gets to put the ticket into a large jar. At the end of each week I choose four or five names and those students receive small prizes.

Daria Guenther
Second-grade teacher
Northfield, New Jersey

■ I have each student write a "news story" about an event the class did during the year. Then, in "news anchor" format, the students deliver their news stories and I videotape their presentations.

Cheryl Osborn
Fifth-grade teacher
Kent, Washington

■ During the last nine weeks of school my students "build sundaes" to earn passes for an end-of-year banana split party. For each week a student turns in all of his or her homework, the student earns part of the sundae.

Karen Green
Middle school math teacher
Spring Creek, Nevada

■ At the end of the year I prepare for my classroom auction. As I pack up my classroom, I gather items such as crayons and markers, bookmarks, and stickers to auction off the last week of school. At auction time I think of a number and the child who guesses my number wins the item on the auction block.

Ruthann Etzkorn
Elementary resource teacher
Aberdeen, New Jersey

■ I give my students a sneak peek at what they can expect when they move onto the next grade. We visit the next grade teacher, find out the daily routine and discipline plan, and incorporate them into our routine.

Tina Snyder
Middle school special education teacher
Lovelock, Nevada

■ I stick to the regular schedule for as long as possible in June to help my kids focus. They find comfort in the routine. I spice up the routine by using games, hands-on activities, discussions, and group work.

Genevieve Petrillo
Third-grade teacher
Belleville, New Jersey

Ted Pitts

Tim Greenway

■ I create a scavenger hunt with different stations that require students to solve math problems that earn them clues. Students must solve all the clues to reach a final destination on a treasure map, which leads them to a treasure box filled with donated prizes.

Deborah Gendreau
Middle school math and science teacher
St. Agatha, Maine

■ At the end of every semester, I ask my students to evaluate my teaching skills and the health curriculum. I also ask them to list the health topics they find interesting and helpful. I use this information to identify their favorite unit and save it for the end of the year.

Deborah L. Tackmann
High school health education teacher
Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Got an Answer?

How do you get students geared up for the new school year?

E-mail your answer to dilemma2@list.nea.org. Or send by regular mail, or fax to 202/822-7206. Include your name, city, state, and job. If published, you will receive an *NEA Today* mug!

Class Harmony

To get my students' attention, I blow a harmonica. When the students hear the harmonica, they know to stop what they are doing, look at me, and listen quietly. I have the kindergarten and first-grade students put their hands on their heads as well, which they think is fun. I wear the harmonica around my neck at all times and use it with all my students, in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Alan Pilkenton
Lansing, Michigan

Student Participation

To ensure that I call on all of my students equally, I put everyone's name on an index card. I keep the deck of cards with me and instead of calling on students who raise their hands, I call on the student whose card appears next in the deck. This helps me make sure I'm not just calling on those students who raise their hands. It also keeps my students on their toes since they never know when their card will come up next.

Jennifer Caldwell
Grant County, Kentucky

Two-Minute Tips
Works4Me
nea's e-mail classroom tip of the week!

Have a great idea?

You can pass along your tip to *NEA Today*'s 2.7 million readers in one of five ways:

- **By mail: *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036**
- **By phone: 202/822-7201**
- **By fax: 202/822-7206**
- **By e-mail: Ideas@neatoday.nea.org**
- **Through the Web: www.nea.org/neatoday**

RESOURCES

Educator's Job Search

Forget about skimming the classified ads for a great job. The *Educator's Job Search*, available for $10 from the NEA Professional Library, will give you the tips and tricks you need to land the job of your dreams. This interactive guide includes exercises to help you identify and promote your job strengths, write an impressive résumé, master job interviews, maintain a job network, stay motivated, and evaluate the job offers you get. To order a copy, call 800/229-4200 or visit http://home.nea.org/books/.

Teachers-Teachers.com

Want to speed up your job search? Visit www.teachers-teachers.com. This free service allows applicants to post their résumés and cover letters online, search for jobs by location, receive notices by e-mail about available teaching positions, view school websites, and send application materials electronically. You can even record an interview that hiring schools and districts can review.

Quick Tips

Looking for helpful classroom tips? Check out NEA's Works4Me website at www.nea.org/tips/. You can sign up for free weekly e-mail tips submitted by other teachers. The site also links to the Works4Me Tips Library, an archive of more than 400 helpful tips submitted to the list. You'll find suggestions for staying organized, managing your class, working with technology, building relationships with parents, and improving your teaching techniques. You also can access the tips through OWL's "My Profession" channel at www.owl.org.

ESP

[ORGANIZING]

A Voice On the Job

ESPs on Maryland's Eastern Shore organize local Associations to win better benefits, pay, and working conditions.

MSTA staffer Debra Williams-Garner (standing) discusses organizing strategies with Kathy Cordrey, Bernice Collins, and Jeff Dean during February's conference.

Education support professionals on Maryland's Eastern Shore are making their collective voice heard. Hundreds of ESPs and supportive teachers have worked tirelessly to build membership in existing Maryland State Teachers Association (MSTA) units and form new ones for support professionals in all nine counties along the coast. Their efforts already have met with early success.

"This is a new beginning," says Wayne Bedwell, an MSTA member and a supervising custodian for Kent County Public Schools. "Already 77 percent of ESPs in our school districts are dues-paying members. It's been a good ride."

The journey started last year when members of the MSTA lobbied successfully for legislation expanding teacher and ESP bargaining rights.

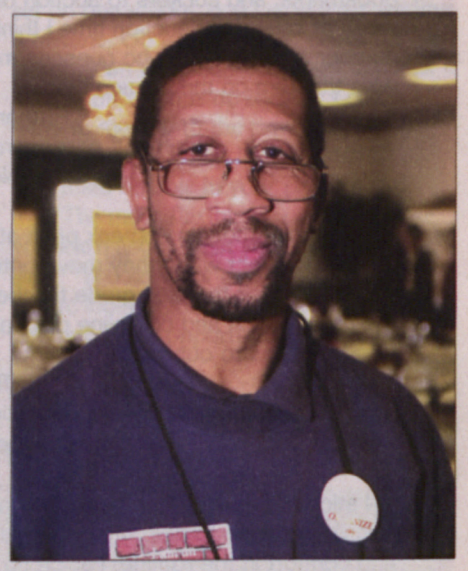
In addition to giving Maryland ESPs the right to bargain for due process in discipline and dismissal proceedings, the legislation extends first-time collective bargaining rights to the 3,000 education support professionals on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

In each county, once 30 percent of the ESPs employed join the Association, they can request a representation election to select MSTA as their collective bargaining agent. Campaign leaders already are predicting that ESPs will either win the elections or recruit enough members so that the school districts voluntarily will recognize MSTA as the official bargaining agent.

"You would not believe the excitement in this campaign," says Jackie Harris, MSTA's ESP UniServ director coordinating the Eastern Shore campaign.

"This is an unbelievably active membership. When we lobbied for the legislation last year, it was the members who did the work. And now we have the same members organizing new members. MSTA can give people resources, but it's the members who get things done."

More than 50 ESPs and teachers braved heavy snows in February to



"Understaffing is a huge issue for custodians, and we can only address that if we have a collective voice."

—Larry Moore, MSTA member and custodian for Caroline County Schools

Going the Extra Mile

Keeping up with Technology

Using a $3,250 NEA ESP Technology Grant the local received last summer, the Seminole Educational Clerical Association (SECA) in Florida plans to help interested members expand their computer knowledge.

SECA purchased a laptop computer and projector with the grant. The laptop helps SECA President **Jimmie Blake** strengthen his communication with members. The local also uses it to prepare presentations for membership drives and training programs.

"The Association needs to keep itself updated. If you're not updated with technology, then you're considered a dinosaur," Blake says.

The Berkeley Education Association of Paraprofessionals in Michigan also received a $3,450 NEA ESP Technology Grant last August. The local used the funds to purchase two laptop computers and digital cameras and plans to train its members how to use technology.

The local hopes the efforts will help ESPs become comfortable with technology, says **Sally Savasky,** a school media specialist and Association member. Members participated in several training sessions last fall.

ESPs from the district's eight schools take turns using the equipment. The effort is part of an Association program to put a laptop in each school for ESP use.

First ESP Conference

Sixty-five participants attended NEA-Alaska's first statewide ESP conference, a one-day event that preceded the statewide leadership training conference.

Members pushed for the conference for several reasons, says **Nancy Castillo,** ESP director at-large for the NEA-Alaska Board of Directors. ESPs wanted an opportunity to meet, network, and share ideas with each other, she says. The Association also wanted to reach out to ESP members in more remote parts of the state, especially along the coast.

"We are a fast growing group and we have very similar issues to the certificated people in this area, but we have our own issues and our own concerns," Castillo says. "I feel like we need to bring those issues and concerns forward and be an integral part of NEA-Alaska."

The conference, held last October, featured sessions on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, technology issues for classified employees, organizing, and labor laws. Castillo and other members of the state ESP committee already are planning next fall's event.

attend an MSTA ESP organizing conference in St. Michaels, Maryland. Members participated in workshops on team-building, learned specifics about the laws governing the representation elections, and practiced techniques for educating co-workers by holding group discussions and simulated interviews.

The conference also addressed ways for battling the misinformation some school districts have provided that has given employees the impression they are not eligible to join MSTA.

"Many ESPs have been misled about their rights," says Jody Murdoch, a school secretary and MSTA member. "Some of the employees we talk to are afraid. They have been led to believe either that they can't join or that bad things will happen to them if they do. Our job is to help them overcome those fears through education—by telling them the truth."

Ronnie Valentine, an MSTA member and school bus driver in Queen Anne's County, Maryland, says the response she has seen from members has been overwhelmingly positive because of the critical job issues involved.

"Getting fair pay and benefits is just the tip of the iceberg," she says. "This campaign is about respect. School employees need it and want it.

"I've been working here for 10 years, and I can tell you that my co-workers are ready to work hard to improve their jobs. The drivers I've talked to who have joined MSTA have told me their dues is the best money they have ever spent. We're going to win this."

Larry Moore, an MSTA member and custodian in his 27th year with Caroline County Schools, says the process of building membership has been slow but steady.

"It takes long, hard work, especially because of the intimidation custodians have felt from the school district," says Moore. "But we're succeeding because the issues are big. Understaffing is a huge issue for custodians, and we can only address that if we have a collective voice."

Jean Lewis, an MSTA member and high school special education teacher in Cambridge, Maryland, says the collective voice of school employees should be the voice of teachers and support professionals alike.

"I'm helping ESPs build their membership because we need a comprehensive group working in collaboration both inside the classroom and in improving our jobs to better serve students," she says. "I can't do my job without daily help from support professionals, so I need to be there for them, too. Together, we bring the quality to education. We need to stick together all the way." ✔

—Matt Simon

For More: Visit www.msta.nea.org or contact Jackie Harris at 410/548-2875.

Photos by Sandy Schaeffer

[PROFILE]

One Perfect Piece

Kelly McWhirter

Name: Linda Johnson

Job Title: Paraeducator, Twin Spruce Junior High School, Gillette, Wyoming

What I Do in My Job: I work with students who are legally blind or low vision. I taught myself to read and write Braille so I could better serve my students by helping them with their studies and translating their books into Braille.

The Most Rewarding Part of My Job: Former students have invited me to their graduation ceremonies. There is nothing more rewarding than watching a student receive a high school diploma. I just beam with pride.

Why I Do What I Do: I like challenges. I like learning new things such as Braille. I like the challenge of convincing a blind student that anything is possible.

My Favorite Pastime: Antiquing! I will visit any shop, anywhere and spend hours scouring the shelves for that one perfect piece. I love the history in antiques. Every piece has a story of where it's been and where it's going.

How I've Helped My Association: I met a bus driver several years ago with a husband and three children whom she could barely support on her salary. The family was on welfare and, eventually, the woman had to quit her job because the pay was too low.

Since then, I have fought to increase teacher and paraprofessional salaries. Eventually our teachers received a substantial raise and the education support professionals received a $1 per hour raise. We still have a long way to go, but I will continue to fight for better labor laws in Wyoming.

A Little Known Fact About Me: One day I was teaching a blind student a lesson when the lights in the school building suddenly went out. I patted my student's arm and said, "Don't be scared, I'm right here. The lights just went off." The student replied, "It's OK. I'm blind. Don't worry, I can take you anywhere you need to go in the building." ✔

ESP RESOURCES

Paraeducator Handbook
NEA's ESP Quality Department has released a revised edition of the *Paraeducator Handbook.* This handy guide includes information and resources about how the 1997 revision of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act affects paraeducators. The handbook includes an overview of IDEA '97, ideas for professional development, training resources, and updated information from the state affiliates. To request a free copy, call 202/822-7151 or visit the ESP website at www.nea.org/esphome/.

Playground Safety
Every year, more than 200,000 children are injured on playgrounds. The National Program for Playground Safety (NPPS), located at the University of Northern Iowa, offers resources and information to help keep children safe while they play. The NPPS website includes statistics on playground-related accidents, and information on equipment manufacturers and distributors, injury prevention, and a playground inspection guide. Check out the site at www.uni.edu/playground/home.html.

Asthma and Schools
The Asthma and Schools website at www.asthmaandschools.org offers a variety of asthma-related resources for educators. The section "Asthma Essentials" includes general information about asthma, its triggers, and treatment. The site also offers a simple, searchable database that links to educational materials, medical information, websites, and other useful resources. Visitors to the site can recommend new resources as well.

No Child Left

Nancy J. Pierce

A little over a year ago, President George W. Bush sat at a worn, wooden desk in the gymnasium of Ohio's Hamilton High School and put his signature to a massive federal law called the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

Here, the President declared before a foot-stomping crowd, was the symbol of a "new era" begun. And it was true. Not in four decades had Washington served up such a sweeping overhaul of federal education policy. Passed in Congress with bipartisan support, the 1,100-page bill—the latest incarnation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965—markedly expanded the federal government's role in education, prescribed mandates to the states, and along the way touted goals almost nobody could dispute: Close the student achievement gap, make public schools accountable, set standards of excellence for every child, put a qualified teacher in every classroom.

So noble were these goals that even Sen. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, Bush's political nemesis, stood by the President's side to hail the bill as a legislative *tour de force*.

That was then.

It may have sounded good to some, but this law is heading down the wrong track. What it means to you—and what NEA's doing about it.

Behind?

Today, as educators and policy makers continue to pore over the bill's long-awaited regulatory details, the reality of its implementation is slamming against the rhetoric.

The bill is being funded at levels dramatically below what Congress intended, analysts say, and it's rife with flaws that undermine the very goals it set out to achieve. As NEA President Reg Weaver put it, "Washington has built a house of cards and is now blowing those cards down on top of the very students it claims to shelter."

Indeed, the bill's myriad requirements (many ambiguous still) have thrown state officials into a confused frenzy as many face the stark possibility that most of their schools will be deemed failing—even schools that improve. Even schools like Hart Middle School in Rochester Hills, Michigan, which was lauded as a Blue Ribbon school by the U.S Department of Education last May only to be rated "low-performing" four months later.

"It's like saying everybody in the country is sick," notes Joel Packer, an NEA lobbyist. "How do you figure out how to focus your resources, especially if what you want to do is help those who are really sick?" The challenge is made all the more onerous as many states grapple with their most debilitating fiscal crises in decades.

So troubling has been the turn of events that Kennedy, a key sponsor of the bill, has warned that the success of the law "is now greatly imperiled." He's called for "fully funding the reforms outlined in the law" and for reconsidering "regulations that contradict the plain language of the law."

The problems come as no surprise to NEA leaders, who two years ago lobbied successfully to have the most egregious parts of the then-evolving law removed. Vouchers, testing of current teachers, across the board hiring freezes of paras—all were jettisoned.

To combat many of the remaining flaws, NEA has created the Great Public Schools for Every Child action plan (see page 25). Here's what you need to know:

You can get involved. Talk to people in your community about what's wrong with the law. Invite elected representatives to your school to see firsthand the challenges you face. And get colleagues who aren't NEA members to join—and to join the fight!

Stay tuned. NEA has marshaled forces to influence state implementation plans, educate members on the law, and help them fulfill its current mandates. National leaders continue a full-court press for amendments and congressional hearings.

Read on. This third *NEA Today* Special Report on the No Child Left Behind Act offers a critical look at the law, gives voice to member concerns, and details what NEA has been doing, and will do, to help minimize its burdens.

Continues on page 22

IN THIS SPECIAL REPORT

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A recap of some key provisions of the law, why they won't work, and the fixes Congress should make.

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So What Do You Know? p.23
A quiz to check your No Child Left Behind knowledge quotient.

Could Have Been Worse! p.24
A glimpse at what NEA lobbying helped quash.

Making Noise Close to Home p.25
How NEA members and affiliates are rallying for change.

Want a Happy Ending? p.25
NEA's Great Public Schools for Every Child action plan.

Check It Out p.26
Resources on the law and its provisions.

Get Informed. Get Energized. Get Involved. p.27
NEA leaders travel the country to hear members' concerns.

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Where NEA Stands

NEA believes that all children should be guaranteed the right to a free and quality public education. How do we get there?

- ✔ **Close the achievement gap.**
- ✔ **Boost student achievement.**
- ✔ **Put a highly qualified teacher in every classroom.**

These are the long-standing goals of NEA. Based on research and practical classroom experience, NEA believes that to achieve these goals takes:

- ✔ **Small classes.**
- ✔ **Effective mentoring for beginning teachers.**
- ✔ **Relevant professional development for educators.**
- ✔ **Innovative efforts to involve parents.**
- ✔ **Higher pay, which keeps talented people in the profession.**
- ✔ **Adequate funds to make the reforms.**

The laws that require states to label schools based on a single test, and that provide sanctions instead of help for students, educators, and schools, are an obstacle to helping all students succeed.

Elected leaders must live up to promises of being "pro-education" and do some of the heavy lifting that it will take to create great public schools for every child. And that includes examining—and amending—the flaws in the No Child Left Behind Act.

The Law: What It Is, And Isn't

The law aims to do a lot—that's clear. But will it close the student achievement gap, or build a quality teaching force? That's a lot murkier.

The law requires testing, and plenty of it. Annual tests in reading and math in grades 3-8 and once in grades 10-12 begin in 2005-06. Testing in science once in elementary, middle, and high school will begin in 2007-08. School and district progress targets must be met each year, and by 2014, every student in America must have reached state-defined proficiency.

What about a quality education for all children? What about attracting the best to the profession? What about instilling a love of learning in students? That's what's being left behind. Consider these other inconsistencies in the law.

SHOW ME THE MONEY

The law says: NCLB programs should be implemented fully and effectively.

Glitch: There's not enough money. Funding for 2003 fell $8 billion short of authorized levels, and the President has proposed a 2004 allocation at $11 billion below target. Even more disturbing: Title I—the fiscal savior for tens of thousands of disadvantaged students the President says he most wants to help—would fall short by $6 billion.

Consequence: States already battling budget crises will be under increasing strains to find money to meet the demands presented by the law: development of costly tests, teacher training and recruitment, books, and building construction and expansion. In addition, more than 48,000 schools that have disadvantaged students—that's two-thirds of all elementary schools—will be severely shortchanged. Title I funds pay for teachers, paraeducators, pre-K and after-school programs, and a range of supplemental services in these schools, many of which are in the high-poverty districts the law was supposed to help most. But already because of funding shortages, only 40 percent of eligible students are being fully served.

The fix: Fund NCLB and its Title I component at congressionally authorized levels.

WANTED: ONLY THE HIGHLY QUALIFIED

The law says: All teachers should be "highly qualified" by the end of the 2005-06 school year by having state certification and demonstration of competence.

Glitch: Federal education department regulations permit teachers who are providing supplemental services, who are at charter schools, or who are in preparation programs that skirt state certification standards to be deemed highly qualified. At the same time, it labels not highly qualified special education teachers who teach several subjects—but who are not certified in each of those subjects. The law also makes not highly qualified those teachers who were certified as fifth- or sixth-grade elementary teachers—but whose schools were then re-designated middle schools, or vice versa.

Consequence: 1) Some teachers with little experience and training still get to teach children, undermining the purpose of the law. **2)** Teachers who have already proven themselves to be highly qualified must prove again that they are qualified to teach. Indeed, the requirement worsens the acute shortage of teachers, particularly in special education, as tens of thousands of NEA members—many of whom have been teaching for years—will be affected.

The fix: Close the loopholes and clarify the law.

YEARLY PROGRESS—MEASURED FAIRLY

The law says: The student body in each school, as well as students from each of the school's major subgroups—racial and ethnic minorities, English-language learners, low-income, and special education students—must show steady improvement on standardized exams in order for the school and the district to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) targets.

Glitch: The law doesn't give schools similar credit for other important measures of progress, such as increased attendance and graduation rates, student work samples, or percentage of students taking Advanced Placement exams. While those measures can be used, they cannot put a school in compliance with AYP. To the contrary, the regulations allow schools to meet their progress targets even as graduation rates for their lowest performing students *decline*.

Consequence: Schools have little incentive to keep at-risk students from leaving school, since those students are more likely to get lower test scores. "Progress" ends up hinging on one test, on one given day, and frustration levels among students soar.

The fix: Allow states flexibility to use other measures.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SETUP

The law says: Special education students must be tested on grade level so they can be compared with their peers.

Glitch: Many special education students with learning disabilities find it difficult to read and understand tests developed for their grade levels. And when students do take these tests, some states prohibit the use of special accommodations, such as keyboards or electronic devices, that assist them during their classroom work.

Consequence: Frustration among these students is high, and testing on grade level is likely to be useless. Because these students are set up to fail, their test results become a predictable hindrance to a school's ability to meet progress targets.

The fix: Allow these students to be tested at the grade level teachers know they are at and use those results as a benchmark for charting progress. Also, allow them the full spectrum of accommodations they normally use while doing classroom work.

SANCTIONS: BUT DO THEY CLOSE THE GAP?

The law says: Title I schools that don't meet their progress targets for two consecutive years will be identified as "needing improvement" and must give

Continues on page 24

NCLB Testing Timeline

2002-03
Using a federal formula, each state calculates a percentage of students who should score "proficient" in reading and math this year. Schools must meet this target for all students and for each subgroup of students. In many states, officials say most schools are below their targets. Schools have two years to pull themselves up. (Penalties are supposed to have started this year for schools that have already fallen short of state goals for two years.)

2003-04
Schools strive to make "adequate yearly progress" (AYP), enough to reach the target by 2004-05.

2004-05
States must raise the target percentage of "proficient" students even higher. Schools that have not made AYP for two years are to get extra help. Also, their students can transfer to other public schools.

2005-06
Testing in reading and math is now required annually in each of grades 3-8 and at least once in grades 10-12. Schools that have not made AYP for three years must offer supplemental services such as tutoring.

2006-07
Schools that have not made AYP for four years must take "corrective action," ranging from hiring an outside expert to replacing some staff members.

2007-08
States again raise the target percentage of students who are "proficient." Annual testing in science begins.

The law must be reauthorized by Congress.

2008-09
Schools that have not achieved AYP for six years must reopen as charter schools, replace staff, hire private managers, or give control to the state.

2010-11
States again raise the target percentage of students who are "proficient."

June 2014
Every student in America is "proficient."

Illustration: Joe Kulka

So What Do You Know?

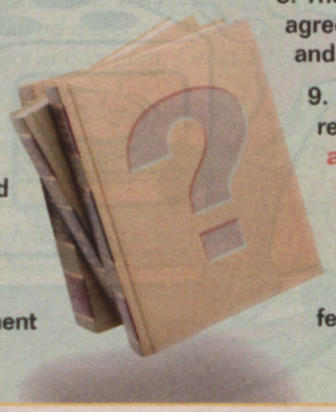
Been boning up? Test your No Child Left Behind knowledge quotient.

1. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is the new federal law that funds proven ways to improve student achievement, such as smaller class sizes, mentoring for new teachers, paid time for planning, and professional development for experienced teachers. **T or F**

2. The new federal education law tells states what their education priorities must be and how they are to achieve them. How much of the bill does the federal government pay?
a. 8% b. 30% c. 50% d. 70%

3. The new federal law guarantees that every American child will read fluently by the year 2014. **T or F**

4. The California Department of Education recently projected the percentage of schools that would achieve the goal of "No Child Left Behind" by 2014. What percentage did the department project? **a. 95% b. 70% c. 40% d. 2%**



5. High-stakes testing, the central feature of NCLB, is a proven strategy for boosting student achievement. **T or F**

6. Outside groups paid with federal money to provide tutoring to students in "failing" schools will be forbidden to discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic group, or religion. **T or F**

7. The new federal law requires all aides paid under Title I to have two years of college. **T or F**

8. The new federal law supersedes collective bargaining agreements that regulate, for example, involuntary transfers and reassignments. **T or F**

9. Under NCLB, who decides how well a student must read in order to be called "proficient"?
a. The federal government
b. The state c. The school district
d. Parents e. Teachers

10. Students in schools that don't reach state standards will be able to go to private schools using federal vouchers. **T or F**

See page 26 for quiz answers.

Scott Suchman

"I have 10 years' experience in the classroom. Ten years doing the job means more than taking a test."

—Holly Rodriguez, teacher assistant at Key School in Arlington, Virginia

students the option to go to other schools that are succeeding. After three failing years, schools must offer students supplemental educational services, including private tutoring and services from faith-based organizations. For continued failures, schools will be subject to outside corrective measures that could lead to a complete restructuring of the school.

Glitch: 1) The law concentrates more on punitive measures than on problem-solving actions that could help the neediest schools succeed; **2)** Schools on the receiving end of transfer requests stand to get overcrowded fast—but regulations make no accommodations for the costs of new teachers or construction, or the predicament of many rural school districts that cannot offer students much choice in the first place; **3)** the regulations contradict the law itself by allowing students to receive supplemental services from certain organizations that discriminate on the basis of religion and race in the hiring of their employees. Supplemental service providers need not be "highly qualified," either.

Consequence: The noble idea of choice and accountability is undermined.

The fix: Give states flexibility to apply sanctions by tailoring constructive, corrective actions to specific problems—not to entire schools and districts. Ensure supplemental services providers are highly qualified and comply with federal civil rights laws, and make allowances for rural districts that are hamstrung because they have so few schools. Also, let states and school districts limit transfers based on class size and building capacity limitations.

FULLY FUNDED TRAINING FOR PARAEDUCATORS

The law says: All paraprofessionals hired with Title I money on or before January 8, 2002, must complete at least two years of college, obtain an associate's degree or higher, or pass an evaluation to demonstrate knowledge and teaching ability by January 8, 2006, if they have not already done so. Newly hired paras must meet these requirements immediately.

Glitch: States and localities are not required to fully fund the costs of training veteran paras.

Consequence: Many paras—especially those who came into the workforce as volunteers—have no incentive to foot the bill on their own, and in most cases are unable to do so anyway. (The average salary for paraeducators who are NEA members is only $15,348 per year.) Also, local salaries may not rise when paras fulfill the additional requirements. So the pool of these educators could decrease if they leave the field to seek higher salaries elsewhere and if potential applicants, discouraged over the requirements, fail to step up to fill the vacant spots.

The fix: Require states and localities to use funds (including federal Title I and Title II) to help paraeducators meet the new quality standards by fully funding the costs of testing, continuing education, and training.

READING BASED ON "SCIENCE"

The law says: A competitive grant program called Reading First will be authorized to help states and districts set up "scientific, research-based" reading programs for students in grades K-3.

Glitch: The law only authorizes grants to reading programs that meet a narrow definition of "scientific, research-based."

Consequence: Many well-proven approaches to reading instruction are not eligible for grants.

The fix: Add language that makes it clear that in sanctioning certain programs, the federal government will use the broadest range of available data, be fully objective in its analysis, and not emphasize one reading approach to the exclusion of others that have been proven effective by teachers and widely accepted by the community of reading researchers.

Recipe for Disaster? It Could Have Been Worse!

During the battles in Congress over the No Child Left Behind Act, NEA lobbyists fought to make it a tool for improving schools, not a whip for punishing educators. Some highlights:

"Highly qualified" teacher and paraprofessional: The original bill required testing of all secondary school teachers who don't have a college major in their field, and all Title I instructional paraprofessionals who don't have two years of college. The final law lets states use multiple approaches in measuring a veteran teacher's content knowledge. The law also allows either states or local districts to design their own ways to measure paraprofessionals' academic competence. New secondary school teachers do have to pass a content test or have the equivalent of a major in their field, but not those who are already working. On this one, NEA won half a pie, or close to it.

"Adequate Yearly Progress" and student testing: NEA pushed for using multiple ways to measure a school's performance but made only limited headway: Student test scores are the critical factor. Some jagged edges of the original bill were filed off, however. For example, the initial proposal was to begin sanctions after a school failed to make "adequate yearly progress" for just one year. That was amended to two years. Less than half a pie on this—one or two slices at best.

Illustration: Mona Daly

Money: The law that Congress passed and the President signed promises a major, 10-year expansion of federal funding. But that promise needs to be carried out with real budget dollars. The first year, funding did go up, but the Administration has proposed a $1.2 billion cut in the budget that is now before Congress. NEA lobbyists are asking Congress to change that. A tug-of-war over this pie.

Vouchers: NEA beat back no fewer than four major efforts to open the door to private school vouchers during the maneuvering over No Child Left Behind. The final law does not allow students to go to private schools with public dollars, but private groups can get public dollars for providing supplemental services like tutoring. NEA won most of the pie.

Collective bargaining protection: NEA pushed hard to keep the law from voiding protections that local affiliates have bargained into their contracts—for example, provisions that restrict involuntary transfers. This battle was won. The whole pie, but it only helps in those states with collective bargaining.

Making Noise Close To Home

OK, the law has put educators in a tough spot. But that doesn't mean that NEA members are powerless. Far from it. Members are getting organized. They're speaking up about what's wrong with the law and what real education reform means—and they're getting more people to join NEA to build a stronger voice. To help inform members and the public, NEA has committed staff and other resources to the Great Public Schools for Every Child action plan. When it comes to dealing with the implementation of the law, says NEA's No Child Left Behind coordinator Dorothy Harrell, "the action is really in the states." That's where nitty-gritty decisions about everything from what's "highly qualified" to what's "proficient" are made. Here's what some state Associations that have been working successfully to influence their state plans advise others to do:

Energize and organize educators. **NEA-Alaska** (NEA-AK) has approved a detailed NCLB "master plan"—with a budget and timeline—that touches on everything from strategies for collective bargaining over the impact of the law to coalition building around NCLB implementation and education funding. "We've trained trainers to go to schools all over the state to correct member misperceptions about requirements of the law," says NEA-AK staffer Virginia McKinney. "We're working very hard to get our members past the grief stage and into the organizing stage."

Meanwhile in North Carolina, the law has already become a tool for organizing. In addition to lobbying state legislators to boost annual paraeducator pay—now averaging just $15,000—the **North Carolina Association of Educators** (NCAE) has been offering local and regional workshops to prepare paraeducators for the state's *WorkKeys*© para assessment, which has a 60 percent success rate on the first try. The workshops, which are publicized in membership recruitment drives, have been offered to NCAE members since they started last August. Already ESP membership has increased 25 percent.

The Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA) has been actively teaching and coaching members about the kinds of education reforms that really turn schools around. That way they will be poised to speak out against parts of the federal law that hurt, not help. "Top-down, one-size-fits-all mandates and 'best practices' alone won't work," says PSEA staffer Mark Wescott. "We're working with our members to ensure that local solutions to the problems of struggling schools are developed locally."

Tap into abundant resources from NEA and its affiliates. NEA provides weekly NCLB bulletins, legislative and legal analysis, staff and leadership training, and resources such as educator-friendly fact sheets, slide presentations, and flow charts that help teachers and paras figure out whether they are "highly qualified." (See pages 28-30.) School district officials in many places are beginning to rely on this NEA-produced material. NEA also offers assistance through federal lobbying and regular contacts with the U.S. Department of Education.

In states such as **Alabama, Idaho,** and **Minnesota,** superintendents are inviting Association staffers into schools to conduct workshops for teachers and support professionals. **The Idaho Education Association** used NEA networking resources to tap into model work being done by the **Wisconsin** and **Ohio** affiliates to draft NCLB-related contract language for local negotiators.

Influence the state implementation process by getting members on key state committees. The law directs each state to create a "Committee of Practitioners"—including front-line educators, parents, and administrators—to advise each state in carrying out its responsibilities under Title I. And there are a host of other ways to get member voices heard, depending on your state.

In **Colorado,** the Department of Education has set

Continues on page 26

Scott Suchman

"This law doesn't consider all the factors that affect the real classroom. What about the children who have poor attendance, the children who don't bring back homework, the poor turnout for report card conferences? These factors can hinder a teacher's effectiveness, they make it hard to do your job, and yet you're accountable."

—Sherri Duncan,
mentor teacher at Columbia Park Elementary School, Landover, Maryland

Dale Folkerts

Washington member Sally McNair speaks out to the media.

Want a Happy Ending?

The No Child Left Behind Act may be on the books, but how the story ends depends a lot on you.

As NEA lobbyists push to amend the law on Capitol Hill, educators can impact the law's implementation closer to home. Working with state affiliates, NEA will offer training to help members become powerful advocates who can convince state and national legislators and advocate to change the law. It's all part of NEA's action plan, Great Public Schools for Every Child.

"Our members are powerful messengers," says Diane Shust, NEA's director of government relations. "They can educate legislators about the reality of what's going on and the reasons changes are needed to help children and public schools succeed."

Contact your state Association for more information on training and resources available (see page 31). And check out these other ways to get involved:

Invite your member of Congress to your school to see firsthand what educators are up against. It'll be good PR for him or her, and an opportunity for you to get an ear.

Call your local Association. Clarify information you are unsure about.

Encourage your colleagues who aren't NEA members to join—and get involved.

Talk to parents and members of the community. Let them know what's going on.

Volunteer to sit on committees that can influence your state implementation process.

Sign up to be an NEA cyber-lobbyist. Go to www.nea.org/lac to receive alerts and to send letters to members of Congress.

Check out resources on OWL.org. NEA's online community for members will keep you up-to-date on the law and link you to NEA resources. Go to www.owl.org. If you're a first-time visitor, click on the "Register" button on the right-hand column of the homepage. (It's free.)

Tell your story. Write your local newspaper, your member of Congress, school superintendent, and NEA's legislative action center (www.nea.org/lac) to convey the real-life impact of the law.

Dan Loftin

"I'm a professional already! No one's going to show us any more respect because we passed a test or have a degree—and we're definitely not making more money!"

—Christine Denton, media aide at Darden Elementary School, Clarksville, Tennessee, and an 18-year veteran who must pay her own way—on $10 an hour—to get an NCLB-mandated associate's degree.

"Finances are already stressing us enough. Class sizes are exploding, and now, not only do our kids with special needs have to take the same tests as their peers, they have to make the same gains. On top of that, we're told we have to have certification for every subject we teach! That's just bizarre. This can't be an act to improve public education. This is meant to destroy it."

—Katherine Bishop, 1-3 grade special education teacher at Lake Park Elementary School in Oklahoma City, who (though National Board certified in special education) would be considered not "highly qualified" under the new law.

up 11 workgroup subcommittees to address components of the law, and the **Colorado Education Association** has placed at least one member or staffer on each of these panels.

In **Tennessee,** Association members have had a voice on the Committee of Practitioners, the Teaching Quality Committee, and the Teacher Advisory Council. In addition, the **Tennessee Education Association** talks daily with state Department of Education staffers who are making recommendations about the NCLB state plan.

In Hawaii, the **Hawaii State Teachers Association** (HSTA) has established an NCLB Ad Hoc Task Force, which lets state Department of Education staffers know *exactly* what's on the minds of Hawaii teachers—and then reports these meetings to HSTA chapters.

Help Title I paraeducators meet the law's tough, new "highly qualified" mandates.

The law's requirement is a potentially costly, discouraging proposition for some paras: Hold an associate's degree, complete two years of college, or pass a rigorous state or local assessment. But some Associations have created ways to ease the burden:

The **New Jersey Education Association** has joined a coalition of educators, administrators, parents, and school board members to develop a "multidimensional assessment scheme" for paraeducators. The bottom line: Eligible paras would receive specialized training through local community colleges (for either an associate's degree or 48 credits) at convenient high school locations—or develop a portfolio evaluation with criteria approved by the Department of Education.

"When paras leave this summer, they should know their jobs are ensured in the fall," says NJEA staffer Wayne Dibofsky. "And we'll help them to bargain proactively with districts to maintain their benefits and reflect their new credentials in the salary guide."

Vermont-NEA is encouraging paraeducators to organize district task forces that establish portfolio assessment as a way to meet the law's requirements. Many paras are now helping each other verify past classes for portfolio credit, and in at least one district, paras and principals are using new standards for district planning goals and designing para training to meet those goals.

The **Alabama Education Association** is working closely with the state education superintendent on para credentialing. The Association wants a statewide assessment, something that's portable from district to district, and professional development for paras before they're evaluated.

The **Delaware State Education Association** has convened two rounds of NCLB informational forums for paraeducators, and has been collaborating with the state Department of Education and universities to develop classes for para certification. It will soon offer training for paras to prepare for a test being developed by the Educational Testing Service.

—Written by Marilyn Milloy, Dave Winans, Alain Jehlen, Kristen Loschert, and John O'Neil, with reporting from Robin Nettinga (Idaho), Linda Edwards (Colorado), Mary Ann Blankenship (Tennessee), Angela Farthing (North Carolina), Ellen David Friedman (Vermont), Pam Nichols (Delaware), and Arlene Lee (Hawaii).

Answers to quiz from page 23:

1. False. The law promises increased federal funding, but so far that promise hasn't been kept. The main focus of the law is on mandates, not money—punishing schools for low scores, not helping them do better.

2. a.

3. False. It only punishes educators if some children don't.

4. d.

5. False. A recent study of the actual experience of states that have adopted high-stakes testing shows there is very little effect on achievement in either direction. Scores on the high-stakes tests themselves went up, but scores on other tests measuring the same academic areas did not—a sign that students were getting better at taking the high-stakes tests but not actually learning more than before.

6. False. The law says federal civil rights laws apply, but the Department of Education's regulations say outside groups are exempt because the money is passed through local school districts. So while school districts are appropriately prohibited from discriminating, private groups that actually use the money are not. This will likely be settled in court.

7. False. The academic competence requirement applies only to paraprofessionals with instructional duties, and it allows for state or local assessments as an alternative to college credentials.

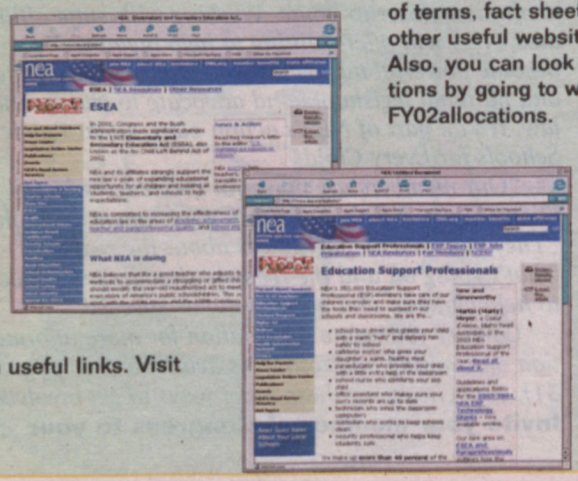
8. False. Collective bargaining agreements continue in full force.

9. b. Each state sets its own standard.

10. False. Voucher proposals were defeated in Congress. The law allows students at schools with low scores to transfer to other public schools, not private schools.

Check It Out

The National Education Association's homepage provides ample material on NCLB, including flow charts that help educators determine if they are "highly qualified." Go to www.nea.org/esea/.



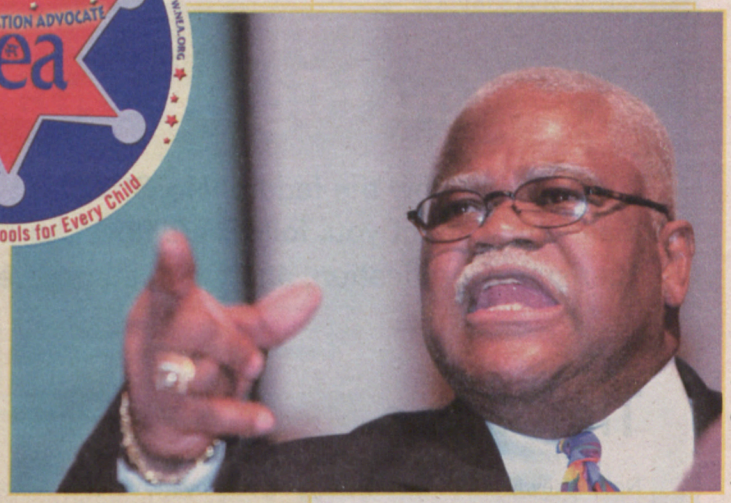
The NEA ESP website offers a close-up look at NCLB's impact on paraeducators, along with useful links. Visit www.nea.org/esphome.

The U.S. Department of Education maintains a website dedicated to the No Child Left Behind Act. The site includes an overview of the law's requirements, a glossary of terms, fact sheets, an online newsletter, and links to other useful websites. See www.nochildleftbehind.gov/. Also, you can look up your district's FY 2002 Title I allocations by going to www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/TitleILEAs/FY02allocations.

Keep up with state activities related to NCLB by visiting the Education Commission of the States website and clicking on the icon for No Child Left Behind. The site includes summaries of legislation and policies enacted by states in response to NCLB. Go to www.ecs.org.

Browse *NEA Today* articles from the past year at www.nea.org.

Get Informed. Get Energized. Get Involved.



Joanne Carole

"I hereby deputize you to be advocates in your schools and communities for public education."

—NEA President Reg Weaver

"Kids are getting physically ill because of the pressure of these tests," NEA Secretary-Treasurer Lily Eskelsen was told at a recent Tennessee Education Association conference.

Sharon Blevins of Kingsport filled Eskelsen in on the details. "She told me, 'One of my third graders actually threw up on the test. I was told to put it in a baggie and send it in with the others for scoring,'" Eskelsen recalls with a shudder.

Eskelsen was alarmed—and not just for the poor scorer who had to deal with the soiled exam. The story exemplifies the "damn-the-consequences" steamroller known, ironically, as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The new law contains provisions for increasing testing and punishing schools that fail to reach standards. (See "The Law: What It Is, and Isn't," page 22.) And, members report, it already is wreaking havoc in their schools—ratcheting up test anxiety, pushing worthwhile activities out of the curriculum, and alarming many teachers and paraeducators who will have to jump new hurdles to keep their jobs.

As Eskelsen and the rest of NEA's Executive Committee (EC) crisscross the country, visiting schools and speaking to members and local leaders, the effects of No Child Left Behind are Topic #1.

"The mood of members is one of dismay, of anger, of feeling that they are being set up to fail," says NEA President Reg Weaver. "Reform must not be done to us. Rather, reform should be done in concert with us, in order to improve and make public education great."

"Politicians have talked in very general terms about a vision that our members happen to agree with," adds NEA Vice President Dennis Van Roekel. "But members are upset because they believe that the timeline of No Child Left Behind—and the lack of resources behind it—are going to be harmful to them and the kids in their classrooms."

Already, the prospect of increased testing has schools cutting back on arts programs and subjects that aren't directly tested. A member in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, said his colleagues were so alarmed by NCLB that they suggested at a faculty meeting that any subject not being tested be removed from the curriculum, says EC member Michael Marks, who teaches debate and drama in Hattiesburg.

Other members wonder "how we can let non-educators, such as test publishers, have so much power over what we as professionals must use to assess our students," notes EC member Marsha Smith of Maryland.

"When members talk about the kids, and about what they're not doing in the classroom anymore, that's when they get most passionate," adds EC member Becky Pringle, a Pennsylvania middle school teacher. "They're saying, 'This is not why I got into the profession.'" Pringle is one of many middle school teachers in Pennsylvania who, despite their proven classroom experience, will have to take a test administered by the Educational Testing Service in order to meet No Child Left Behind's stipulation that all teachers be "highly qualified."

Many Title I paraeducators, who must meet new standards in the federal law, are anxious and upset about the new rules, says EC member and education support professional Iona Holloway of LaPlace, Louisiana. "Many of the people who have worked 25 years or more say they may retire," she says. "Those who have not worked as long are wondering if they'll keep their jobs. I'm trying to keep people upbeat."

Joanne Carole

Phelen Ebenhack

Clockwise from top: NEA President Reg Weaver, Vice President Dennis Van Roekel, and Secretary-Treasurer Lily Eskelsen confer with members at a recent ESP conference in Orlando, Florida.

"If there ever was an issue for us to rally around, this is it. We're going to have to mobilize all our forces and speak with one voice."

—Becky Pringle NEA Executive Committee

EC member Dan Sakota says that, at a faculty meeting at his school in Rexburg, Idaho, "some really didn't know much about the law and hadn't paid much attention to it." One of his colleagues suggested that NCLB "is just another fad."

Others believe NCLB has a not-so-hidden agenda, says EC member Michael Billirakis. "I talked recently with one Ohio member—who probably speaks for many others—who said that this law was passed to destroy public education." When schools are labeled as failing, this member told Billirakis, "then they'll be right there with their answer—vouchers and tax credits."

Given such strong reactions, the law may have an unanticipated consequence.

"If there ever was an issue for us to rally around, this is it," notes Pringle. "We're going to have to mobilize all our forces and speak with one voice."

Are You Highly Qualified Under NCLB?

To determine how the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act provisions on teacher quality may affect you, follow the flow chart below through the Timelines, Licensure/Certification, and Competency sections.

Timelines

Note: "Newly hired" means changing employers, not just changing schools within a district

Do your students receive core content credit from you in English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, civics and government, economics, arts, history, or geography?

- **YES** — Were you "newly hired" after the first day of the 2002-03 school year?
  - **YES** — Are you working in a program supported with Title I funds?
    - **YES** — You must be "highly qualified" in order to be hired → GO TO LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION section
    - **NO** — You must be "highly qualified" by the end of the 2005-06 school year → GO TO LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION section
  - **NO** — You must be "highly qualified" by the end of the 2005-06 school year → GO TO LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION section
- **NO** — You are NOT required to be "highly qualified" under NCLB

Licensure/Certification

Do you have "full certification"? (no waivers on emergency, temporary, or provisional basis)

- **YES** — Go to COMPETENCY section
- **NO** — Have you passed the state licensing test?
  - **YES** — Go to COMPETENCY section
  - **NO** — Do you teach in a charter school that, under your state's charter school law, exempts you from teacher licensing/certification?
    - **YES** — Go to COMPETENCY section
    - **NO** — Are you in an "alternative route" program?
      - **YES** — You must be making progress and complete full certification within three years
        - In addition you must:
          - Receive high-quality professional development, before and while teaching, that is sustained, intensive, and focused on classroom instruction
          - Participate in a teacher mentoring program or receive intensive supervision that consists of structured guidance and regular ongoing support
          - Assume functions as a teacher for a specified period of time, not to exceed three years
          - Demonstrate satisfactory progress toward full certification as prescribed by the state
        - GO TO COMPETENCY section
      - **NO** — You have until 2005-06 to obtain "full certification" or meet criteria for "alternative route"

Jim Decker

Bob Riha, Jr.

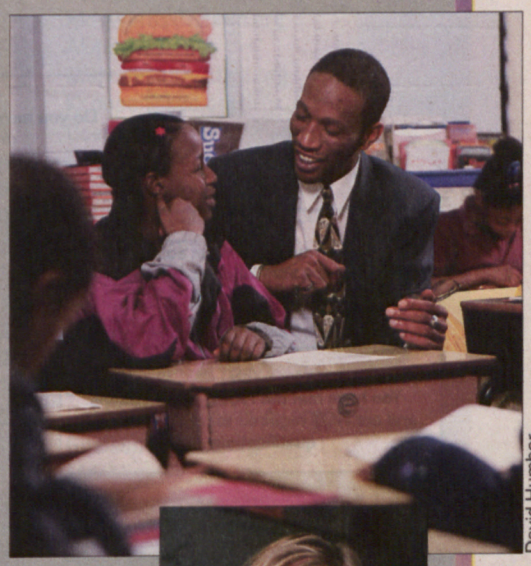
Competency

Do you have a bachelor's degree?

- **NO** — You are NOT "highly qualified" and cannot be hired in a program supported with Title I funds
- **YES** — Do you teach elementary or middle/high?

ELEMENTARY
Have you demonstrated competence in content and teaching skill by passing a state (licensure) test in reading, writing, mathematics, and other elementary curriculum areas?

- **YES** — You are "highly qualified"
- **NO** — Are you "new" to the profession?
  - **YES** — You are NOT "highly qualified" and cannot be hired in a program supported with Title I funds
  - **NO** — Have you met your state's HOUSE* requirements?
    - **YES** — You are "highly qualified"
    - **NO** — You are NOT "highly qualified" and have until 2005-06 to pass test or meet HOUSE requirements



David Humber

Larry Salzman

* HOUSE = High Objective Uniform Statewide Standard of Evaluation

MIDDLE/HIGH
Have you passed a state content (licensure) test in EACH of the subjects you teach?

- **YES** — You are "highly qualified"
- **NO** — Do you have an academic major or coursework equivalent to a major in each of the subjects you teach?
  - **YES** — You are "highly qualified"
  - **NO** — Do you have a graduate degree in each of the subjects you teach?
    - **YES** — You are "highly qualified"
    - **NO** — Do you have advanced certification (e.g., National Board Certification)?
      - **YES** — You are "highly qualified"
      - **NO** — Are you "new" to the profession?
        - **YES** — You are NOT "highly qualified" and cannot be hired in a program supported with Title I funds
        - **NO** — Have you met your state's HOUSE* requirements?
          - **YES** — You are "highly qualified"
          - **NO** — You are NOT "highly qualified" and have until 2005-06 to become highly qualified

Paul Body

Source: NEA Department of Teacher Quality

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www.nea.org

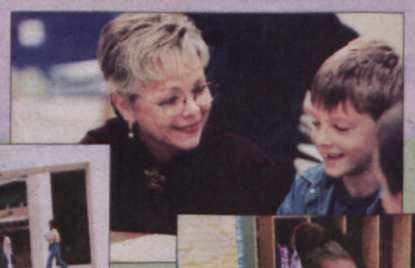
NCLB Requirements for Paraeducators

To determine how the federal No Child Left Behind Act provisions on paraeducators may affect you, follow the flow chart below through the Coverage and Qualifications sections.

Coverage

Do you provide instructional assistance, such as assisting with instruction in a classroom or computer lab, providing one-on-one tutoring, translating, assisting in a library or media center, or conducting parental involvement activities?

- **YES** — Do you work in a program supported with Title I funds?*
  - **YES** — Do you have a high school diploma or equivalent?
    - **YES** — Does your job consist solely of language translation or parental involvement activities?
      - **YES** — You have met the NCLB qualifications and are NOT required to meet additional qualifications.**
      - **NO** — GO TO QUALIFICATIONS section.
    - **NO** — You have not met the requirements. NCLB requires ALL covered paraprofessionals to have a high school diploma or equivalent.
  - **NO** — You are NOT required to meet the NCLB qualifications.**
- **NO** — You are NOT required to meet the NCLB qualifications.**



Qualifications

Do you have an associate's degree?

- **YES** — You have met the NCLB requirements for paraprofessionals.
- **NO** — Do you have two years of study at an institution of higher education?
  - **YES** — You have met the NCLB requirements for paraprofessionals.
  - **NO** — Have you passed a state or local assessment on your knowledge of and ability to assist in the teaching of reading, writing, and math?
    - **YES** — You have met the NCLB requirements for paraprofessionals.
    - **NO** — Were you hired ON or BEFORE January 8, 2002, the effective date of NCLB?
      - **YES** — You have until January 8, 2006, to meet one of the NCLB requirements for paraprofessionals.
      - **NO** — You have not met NCLB requirements. NCLB requires covered paraprofessionals hired AFTER January 8, 2002, to have met one of the qualifications upon employment.

*This includes both schoolwide Title I funding and targeted aid under Part A.
**Check for additional state or local requirements.

Source: NEA Department of ESP Quality

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Sandy Schaeffer

"NCLB is punishing schools for not performing, and that creates a vicious cycle. They need more resources, not less. We need to bring them up, not punish them. Also, we have kids with learning disabilities and kids speaking many different languages. The law expects them to learn at the same pace, and that's completely unfair."

—John Sanchez,
television journalism teacher,
Traweek Middle School,
West Covina, California

Who to Contact, State by State

For more information on how NCLB affects you and how you can help rally for change, here are contacts close to home.

AFFILIATE	CONTACT	PHONE	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Alabama Education Association	Mary Ogles	800-392-5839	Maryo@alaedu.org
NEA-Alaska	Don Oberg	800-996-3225	Doberg@ak.nea.org
Arizona Education Association	Donna Campbell	602-586-3090	Donna.campbell@arizonaea.org
Arkansas Education Association	Richard Hutchinson	501-375-4611	Rhutchinson@nea.org
California Teachers Association	Lynne Faulks	916-442-5895	Lfaulk@cta.org
Colorado Education Association	Phil Moeckli	303-837-1500	Phil.moeckli@nea.org
Connecticut Education Association	Robert Murphy	860-525-5641	Bobm@cea.org
Delaware State Education Association	Beverly Corelle	302-734-5834	Beverly.corelle@dsea.org
Federal Education Association	Sheridan Pearce	202-822-7850	Spearce@nea.org
Florida Education Association	Michael Monroe	850-201-2800	Michael.monroe@floridaea.org
Georgia Association of Educators	Bob Cribbs	678-837-1100	Bob.cribbs@gae.org
Hawaii State Teachers Association	Arlene Williams	808-833-2711	Alee@hsta.org
Idaho Education Association	Robin Nettinga	208-344-1341	Rnettinga@Idahoea.org
Illinois Education Association-NEA	Jo Anderson	630-495-3250	Jo.anderson@ieanea.org
Indiana State Teachers Association	Marilynn Edwards	800-382-4037	Medwards@ista-in.org
Iowa State Education Association	Angie King	515-471-8000	Aking@isea.org
Kansas NEA	Mark Desetti	785-232-8271	Mark.desetti@knea.org
Kentucky Education Association	Kenton Cooper	502-875-2889	Kcooper@kea.org
Louisiana Association of Educators	Guessippina Bonner	225-343-9243	Guessippin.bonner@lae.org
Maine Education Association	Nini McManamy	207-622-5866	Nini.mcmanamy@nea.org
Maryland State Teachers Association	Katie Hiatt	410-263-6600	Khiatt@mstanea.org
Massachussetts Teachers Association	Kathleen Skinner	617-742-7950	Kskinner@massteacher.org
Michigan Education Association	Joan Mapson	517-332-6551	Jmapson@mea.org
Education Minnesota	Marcia Averbook	651-227-9541	Marcia.averbook@educationminnesota.org
Mississippi Association of Educators	Terry Hamm	601-354-4463	Thamm@nea.org
Missouri NEA	DeeAnn Aull	573-634-3202	Deeann.aull@mnea.org
MEA-MFT	David Smith	406-442-4250	Dsmith@mea-mft.org
Nebraska State Education Association	Jay Sears	402-475-7611	Jsears@nsea.org
Nevada State Education Association	Debbie Cahill	702-733-7330	Debbie.cahill@nsea-nv.org
NEA-New Hampshire	Grace Nelson	603-224-7751	Gnelson@nhnea.org
New Jersey Education Association	Martha Deblieu	609-559-4561	Mdeblieu@njea.org
NEA-New Mexico	Charles Bowyer	505-982-1916	Charles.bowyer@nea-nm.org
NEA/NY	Dennis Butler	518-462-6451	Dbuttler@neany.org
North Carolina Association of Educators	Angela Farthing	919-832-3000	Angela.farthing@ncae.org
North Dakota Education Association	Linda Edwards	701-223-0450	Linda.edwards@ndea.org
Ohio Education Association	Betsy Waid	614-227-3087	Waide@ohea.org
Oklahoma Education Association	Larry Miller	405-528-7785	Lmiller@okea.org
Oregon Education Association	Courtney Vanderstek	503-684-3300	Cvanderstek@oregon.org
Pennsylvania State Education Association	Mark Wescott	717-255-7028	Mwescott@mail.psea.org
NEA (Puerto Rico)	Nancy Velazquez	787-736-3798	Nvelazquez@nea.org
National Education Association Rhode Island	Bob Walsh	401-463-9630	Rwalsh@nea.org
South Carolina Education Association	Chuck Watson	803-772-6553	Cwatson@thescae.org
South Dakota Education Association	Janet Wilson	605-224-9263	Wilson@nea.org
Tennessee Education Association	Susan Dalton	615-242-8392	Sdalton@tea.nea.org
Texas State Teachers Association	Jay Levin	512-476-5355	Jayl@tsta.org
Utah Education Association	Kaye Chatterton	801-266-4461	Kaye.chatterton@utea.org
Vermont-NEA	Mark Hage	802-223-6375	Mhage@vtnea.org
Virginia Education Association	Betty Lambdin	800-552-9554	Blambdin@veanea.org
Washington Education Association	Karen Davis	360-943-3150	Kdavis@wa.nea.org
West Virginia Education Association	Anita Maxwell	304-346-5315 x116	Amaxwell@nea.org
Wisconsin Education Association Council	Linda Barth	800-362-8034	Barthl@weac.org
Wyoming Education Association	Gary McDowell	307-634-7991	Gmcdowell@nea.org

Timeline for Future NCLB Mandates

During the 2002-03 school year, each state must:

- Establish a proficiency threshold for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).
- Administer language proficiency tests to all limited-English proficient students.
- Ensure each SEA (State Education Agency) disseminates a state report card and that each LEA (Local Education Agency) collects appropriate data for it from schools in its jurisdiction.
- All teachers hired by the first day of the 2002-03 school year and working in a program supported by Title I, Part A must be highly qualified.
- LEAs receiving Title I, Part A funds begin spending between 5 and 10 percent annually, ensuring teachers become highly qualified by the end of the 2005-06 school year.

By 2003-04

- States must use 2 percent of their Title I Part A funds for school improvement.
- All new Migrant Education Funds will be based on an actual count of migrant children.
- 2004 Targeted Assistance Grants for Section 1204 are available.

By 2004-05

- States must use 4 percent of their Title I funds for school improvement.
- Targeted Assistance Grants under the Reading First Program start.
- LEAs that have failed to make progress ensuring all their teachers are highly qualified must develop an improvement plan.

By 2005-06

- States must develop science standards and assessments for reading/language arts and math in grades 3 through 8.
- Teachers of core academic subjects must be "highly qualified" by the end of the school year and parapros hired by Jan. 8, 2002, and working in Title I programs must meet paraprofessional requirements.

By 2007-08

- Congress must reauthorize ESEA.

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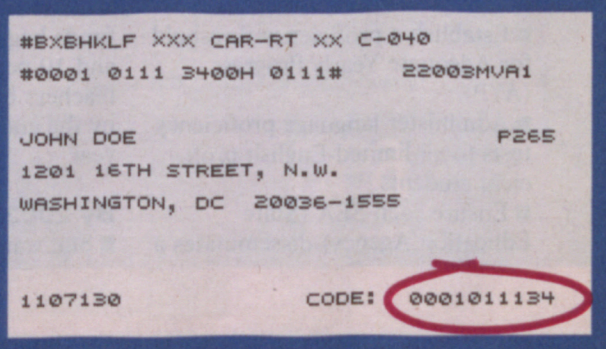
Here's how to register!

Go to www.owl.org. Click on the register button on the right hand side of the screen. Complete the registration form. You'll be asked for your 10-digit NEA membership number. It can be found on the mailing label of this copy of *NEA Today* (see illustration).



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Andy Powell

Should high school start at 9 a.m.?

yes

Should high school start at 9 a.m.? When I first saw this question, I imagined a giant hand tucking me back into bed and my alarm resetting itself. I gave the question more thought, especially during those precious moments of sleep after hitting the snooze button.

I asked my first period class, "Should school start later?" The students were so groggy, all they could muster was a whiny, "It's first period," or the classic, "It's Monday" (even though I asked them on Tuesday). When I asked the same question to another class later in the day, I was met with a roar of responses. They loved the idea of later start times.

The students in the morning class, which starts at 7:25 a.m., are visibly tired. As a whole, our student body is incredibly unhealthy because of lack of sleep.

In Minneapolis, high schools are experimenting with a start time more than an hour later than before, beginning around 8:40. Results show most kids are getting an extra hour of sleep, and grades and attendance are improving.

One obstacle to later high school start times is bus coordination. But many high school students drive to school or are driven. Even in my freshman class, only two ride the bus, and one only rides it as punishment when she gets low grades.

If we want an efficient bus schedule, who says elementary and high schools have to start at different times? I can see some parents being upset about their first grader riding the bus with twelfth graders (Barney meets The Osbournes). But it could lead to a positive mentoring relationship between the younger and older bus riders. And in my district, in suburban Chicago, there are enough buses, and schools are close enough to each other, that older and younger students could ride together without a budget increase to pay for it.

Who is school really for? Are we as educators trying to cater to our own schedule preferences or to our students' need for more sleep?

The purpose of school is student learning. Students learn better when they are fully awake and their brains are active. That doesn't happen at 7:30 or 8 a.m.

KARL DREYER is in his fourth year teaching science at Central High School in Crystal Lake, Illinois. He is working toward his doctorate in curriculum and instruction at Northern Illinois University.

no

It doesn't take a doctor to figure out that the same remedy does not work for everyone. Patients with the same symptoms may need different medicines. Similarly, each school district is different. To say that every high school should have a late start time would be like prescribing aspirin for every pain.

In our district, where all middle and high school children are bused except those who drive themselves, there would be a busing nightmare if some had different start and end times. Our budget has limited resources for bus service, so uniform middle and high school start times are vital. Other districts have other needs. My point is, changing bus schedules can be expensive. Granted, some students can drive themselves. But I have yet to meet a freshman who has a driver's license.

There are other reasons to keep an early start for high school. We want kids to be in class more, not less. Early release for sports activities already has track, golf, and cross-country athletes leaving before the end of the school day for afternoon meets. Later start times would mean they would miss more class time at the end of the day. It is difficult enough to keep students on board who have to miss one or two class periods at least once a week during their sports seasons.

Another issue: I know we are here for the kids, but what about the teachers? High school students need to sleep later. Adults do not. But they work full-time jobs and tire more as the day goes on than do students. It is a tough trade-off. If we start the school day earlier for the benefit of high school kids, we could have less efficient teachers at the end of the day. There are more students than teachers, but each teacher impacts many students. My students are more engaged in the morning—possibly because I am more engaging in the morning.

There are advantages to starting later, but there are also disadvantages. Parents juggle daycare, jobs, and school schedules every day. Let's ask for their suggestions, weigh everyone's needs, and tailor a solution to the unique circumstances of each community.

MARY KAY ACKERMANN is a ninth-year English and language arts teacher at North-Linn High School in Troy Mills, Iowa. She is currently president of the North-Linn Education Association.

What's Your Opinion?

Should high school start at 9 a.m.?
To vote, visit our website at www.nea.org/neatoday and see the results instantly.

Is summer school worthwhile?
The tally on the question in the last *NEA Today*:
48% Yes **52% No**

Should summer vacation be broken into shorter breaks year-round?
If you'd like to take part in this future Debate, send a brief note to Alain Jehlen, ajehlen@nea.org.

Wired

Connect with High-Speed Internet

Dear Web Editor,

I'm confused about the various choices for high-speed Internet access. Which is better, cable or DSL service?

Industry experts estimate that 2 million to 4 million households access the Internet via broadband or high-speed connections. That number could reach 14 million by the end of 2005.

But deciding how to connect can be difficult.

DSL (digital subscriber lines) and cable Internet service are the most popular broadband choices available to home consumers. DSL operates over existing copper phone wires, while cable Internet operates over coaxial wires (the same lines that transmit cable television). Both support high-speed connections to the Net and provide "always on" connections, which allow you to stay logged on to the Internet indefinitely. And both require specialized modems that work with their respective technologies.

The benefits and pitfalls of each technology are not so clear. And their differences center on three issues: cost, speed, and support.

Cost—If you are going to buy a modem, cable modems are less expensive than those for DSL. It is possible to catch an installation offer from your DSL service provider that can make owning your own DSL modem cheaper than going cable. But the price of cable modems continues to fall. Most cable and DSL service providers offer lease options for modems as well.

The cost of basic cable and DSL services, on the other hand, run almost the same: between $50 and $90 per month for cable Internet service and between $40 and $70 per month for DSL. Many cable companies provide discounted Internet service to customers who subscribe to the company's television services as well. These costs can vary significantly, though, if you live in a rural or remote region of the country.

Speed—With DSL service, you receive an individual line between your home and your service provider, which means no one else can transmit data over your connection. In theory, this should speed up your connection.

With cable service, you share your connection to the service provider with all of your neighbors, which can decrease performance.

For the time being, though, cable modems maintain a slight performance advantage over DSL, since most cable networks have not achieved a significant number of subscribers to make the shared connection a critical issue.

When it comes to equipment, cable modems generally have higher bandwidth than their DSL counterparts, which means they theoretically can transmit more data faster.

The quality of DSL service also depends on the quality of your local telephone company's lines. Many DSL subscribers in older neighborhoods experience chronic service problems, which won't change until the equipment improves or phone companies upgrade their wires.

Support—As more businesses enter the DSL market, competition for customers increases and providers have more incentive to offer quality service. Cable companies generally "own" entire networks and are the only choice for cable service. If you experience performance problems with your cable company, you probably won't be able to switch to another provider.

At the same time, while many companies "sell" DSL service in an area, most companies rely on the existing phone lines already in place. They probably are reselling service available through your local phone company. So don't expect your service will improve simply by jumping to a new provider.

Instead, ask your neighbors how they connect to the Net. Find out how often they experience service interruptions and how long it takes for the provider to respond. Their experiences will provide a much better idea of what you can expect from DSL and cable service in your area. ✔

Editor's Pick

Discovery School

Teachers looking for creative curriculum resources may want to visit http://school.discovery.com/. This website, part of the Discovery Channel family, offers lesson plans and teaching tools for educators, games and study tools for students, and product reviews for parents. Teachers can download customized worksheets and quizzes, create original crossword puzzles and word searches, and find clip art for their handouts. Practicing classroom teachers in elementary, middle, and high school constantly review the site for educational relevance.

GOT A QUESTION?

Ask the Web editor at webeditor@list.nea.org. Or send your questions by regular mail to *NEA Today* or by fax to 202/822-7206.

OWL Watch

OWL.org Goes to Summer School

OWL.org can be a useful resource during the summer months as busy educators work toward recertification, brush up on classroom skills, and plan for the coming school year.

OWL.org connects educators to a number of online professional development courses and practical tutorials. You can access these opportunities through OWL's "My Profession" channel under the heading "Online Courses."

OWL.org partners Canter/OnlineLearning.net and Pearson Skylight offer discounts to Association members on a variety of professional development courses. These providers also offer resources to help visitors decide if online courses are right for them.

Visitors to OWL.org also can connect to the Center for Online Professional Development (COPD), a nonprofit corporation developed by NEA members committed to providing affordable professional development to fellow Association members. COPD offers credit and noncredit courses on topics such as using instructional technologies to transition from classroom to online instruction.

PBS TeacherLine offers facilitated, self-paced minicourses designed to help teachers bring technology into their classrooms. These courses currently are available only through participating PBS member stations. Courses cover all grade levels and include topics in math, computer science, and language arts.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) offers several online tutorials on education topics. These free interactive multimedia lessons include short articles, video and audio files of experts and practitioners, and resources.

In addition to links to courses and tutorials, OWL.org contains numerous features, such as the popular Works4Me tips and OWL discussion boards, that give educators practical information and tools to help them in their schools.

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24 MONTHS	2.91% APY*	1.55% APY**	1.15% APY**	1.01% APY**
36 MONTHS	3.41% APY*	2.10% APY**	1.85% APY**	1.75% APY**
48 MONTHS	3.75% APY*	2.50% APY**	1.85% APY**	2.24% APY**
60 MONTHS	4.00% APY*	2.85% APY**	2.70% APY**	2.89% APY**

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**All other bank APYs shown in the comparison chart are valid as of 3/5/03, based on balances of $1,000 and terms shown. Source–*Market Rates Insight*, 3/5/03.

†Eligible NEA family members include parents, spouse (or domestic partner) and children. The NEA-Sponsored GoldCertificate CD has been developed for NEA members and their families only. If a member decides not to renew membership, that person and his/her family will no longer be eligible to receive the preferred rates through the NEA-Sponsored GoldCertificate CD. If eligible, a replacement account will be offered.

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Speed Racer

David Zalubowski

Colorado member **Stacy Kuhn** always sets the pace—figuratively and literally. Each day she steers the lives of energetic first graders at Clyde Miller Elementary School, then switches gears to fight for teachers' rights as vice president of the Aurora Education Association. After school, she slips behind the wheel of the pace car for CART (Championship Auto Racing Team), a rare all-female team of professional race car drivers.

As a pace car driver, Kuhn leads the racers around the track at the start of a race and during hazardous conditions, such as after an accident. Racers may not pass a pace car when it is on the track, so Kuhn provides an essential function that helps keep drivers safe during the race.

Kuhn, now 34, developed her interest in cars and racing as a child. Her stepfather, a race car driver, asked her if she wanted to try it and at 17 she started racing competitively. She quickly surpassed the skill of her stepfather, and in 1991 became the first woman to secure the title of Rookie of the Year from the Sports Car Club of America.

Then, after an impressive run as a competitor, Kuhn accepted an invitation to audition for pace car driving. She has spent the past five years driving with the team, which includes accomplished American and Canadian drivers.

Kuhn feels proud that she and her teammates have helped increase interest in racing among young women. "It's still a very male-dominated sport, the good old boy's club," she says. "But, I see a lot more women involved in motor sports, which is great." ✔

—Lorinda Bullock

Battling the Bay

Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay once housed the toughest criminals in the nation. Today, it is the haunt of some of the toughest athletes in the nation, including **George Rehmet,** a special education teacher at Redwood Heights Elementary School in Oakland, California.

Rehmet is part of an elite group of swimmers who brave frigid temperatures and swift currents to swim the one-and-a-half mile stretch of water from Alcatraz to the San Francisco shore. He has made the swim not once, but 12 times.

"I was inspired by my late father," says Rehmet of his fitness hobby. "Each New Year's Day he would surf in the cold ocean water of northern California. I first thought of swimming the Bay as kind of a salute to him and because I like the idea of challenging nature."

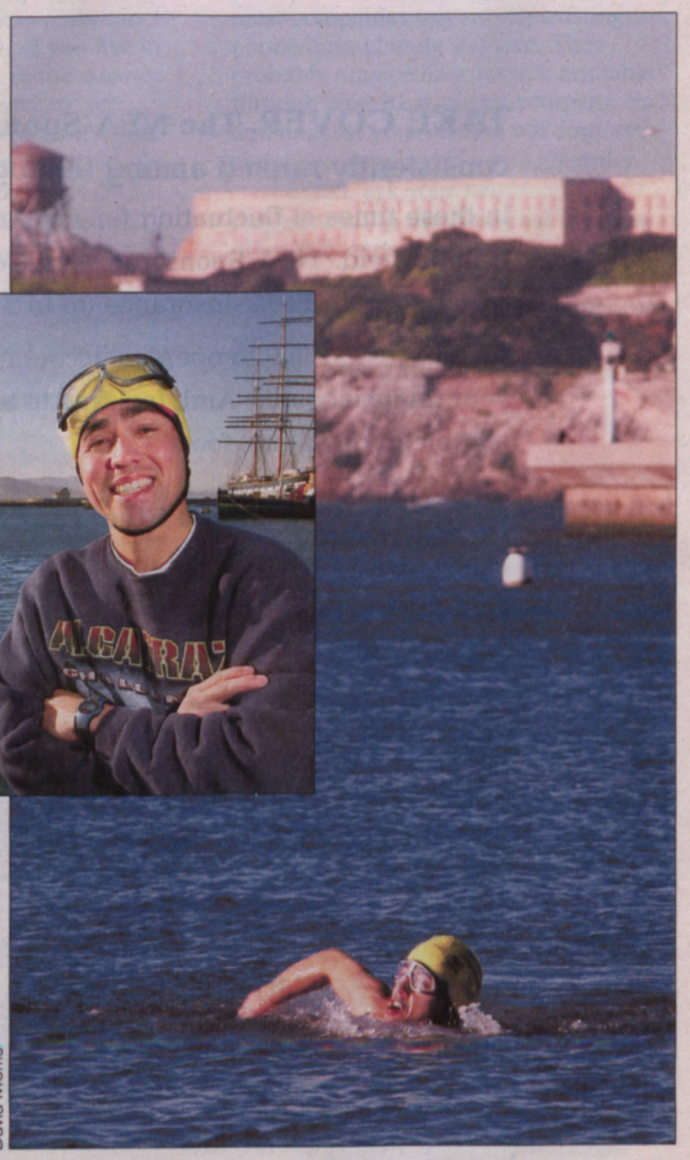
While Rehmet, 36, enjoys the challenge, he is not reckless. Rehmet attempted the feat only after becoming a successful triathlete. When he makes the swim from Alcatraz, fellow swimmers follow him in an observation boat to warn him of hazards and monitor his physical condition.

"The water can get as cold as 52 degrees and an average swim takes 45 minutes, so hypothermia is a real threat," says Rehmet. "There are currents of eight miles an hour. You also have to know if ships are approaching. You never do something like this alone, or without formal fitness training and a doctor's OK for extreme exercise."

Rehmet's ultimate tribute to his father came this year, when he made the swim from Alcatraz on New Year's Day.

"My father would have liked it," says Rehmet. "It was tough, but not as tough as teaching. Teaching is a whole different level of toughness." ✔

—Matt Simon



David Morris

GOT A TIP?

Do you have an interesting story idea? Contact Kristen Loschert, section editor, at kloschert@nea.org.

Perfect Harmony

Jim Decker

Long after students and faculty have left the halls of Garside Junior High School in Las Vegas, Nevada, the sound of heartfelt gospel music often fills the air as night custodian **Johnny Wilburn** practices a tune or tinkers with the notes for the latest song he's composing.

But Wilburn's performances aren't limited to the empty halls of a junior high school. This up-and-coming contemporary Christian artist has sung with R&B artist Angela Winbush, Michael Bolton, and Grammy award-winners Take 6. He also has opened for gospel heavy hitters Daryl Coley and Commissioned. In December, Wilburn and his group One For All performed on BET's Bobby Jones Gospel show, a popular showcase of new talent and well-established gospel stars.

Bothered by today's popular music—which he believes degrades women and focuses on flashy material possessions—Wilburn set out to write and produce more uplifting tunes. "There's a lot of junk out there. It's time for us to stand up and say, 'I'm not going to do that with my gift,'" he says.

He describes his music style as "laid back." Fans can hear the influence of Coley and jazz and funk artists like Earth, Wind, and Fire in his song "Shine," featured on his online music website http://artists.mp3s.com/artists/103/johnny_wilburn.html. In the song, Wilburn croons over a smooth up-tempo beat reminiscent of his performances with a jazz group, appropriately named Smooth, at a number of Vegas night clubs.

But despite his extensive repertoire, Wilburn remains committed to his true passion, gospel music. "I've got to be a gospel artist. That's what gets me going," he says. "I've seen that kind of music change people more than any other type." ✔

—Lorinda Bullock

Reclaiming Hope

Serving the public doesn't end when you retire. NEA-Retired members like Chloe Giampaolo and Grady Yancey are sowing seeds of hope by tackling some of the toughest issues confronting their communities.

Chris Hartlove

"A man's greatest fear in prison is dying at the hands of another man—and it happens all the time," says **Chloe Giampaolo,** explaining what draws two dozen inmates to the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), a series of conflict resolution workshops she facilitates at the Maryland Correctional Institute at Jessup (MCIJ).

The project, founded in 1975 by inmates and Quakers in New York state, helps participants shed destructive impulses and build positive attitudes and skills for dealing with others. Maryland member Giampaolo, who taught in public schools for 35 years, has conducted AVP workshops since 1989.

"I'm not a bleeding heart," Giampaolo says, "but I've gained a healthy respect for people who are incarcerated that society has disowned. I've always been in awe of the talent and intelligence of the men I work with."

Some of the best inmate facilitators in the program are "lifers": men who know they will never again walk freely outside prison walls. "These men see that they can make a difference to the younger men coming in," Giampaolo explains.

> "It gives me a great feeling to work with men who want to change, and to serve as a vehicle for change. That's what keeps me going."
>
> —Chloe Giampaolo

The program has helped Giampaolo grow as well. "It's hard to explain just how, but it's made me more of a whole person," she says. "It gives me a great feeling to work with men who want to change, and to serve as a vehicle for change. That's what keeps me going."

Whether they are sent by the courts or sign up because they have reached a dead end in their jobs, the students who come to **Grady Yancey's** adult literacy classes in Atlanta are assured of his commitment to their cause. If they attend class regularly and carry out the assignments, he'll do everything he can to help them read, write, and compute successfully.

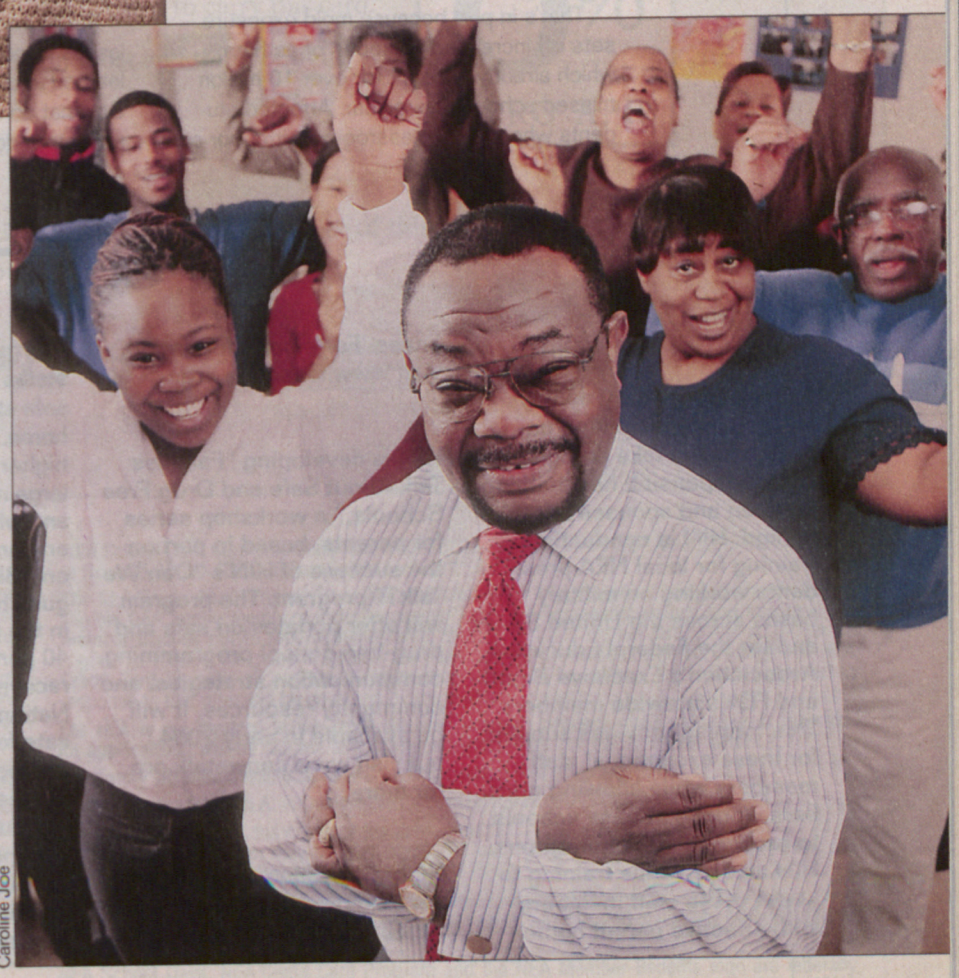
"Most of the students are working toward their GED," Yancey says. "Many of the younger ones have not completed school because of poor attendance. The older ones usually come in because they're having problems finding a job, or they've been downsized and are trying to get a GED before going on to junior college and learning additional skills."

In two years of teaching adult literacy, Yancey, a retired social studies teacher, has helped about 80 students improve their literacy skills. Many have gone on to get their GED. Although the program doesn't follow up formally on all graduates, "the students who have finished say that the program has been very helpful for going on to the next step, such as vocational schools or to college," Yancey says. "Some have gotten better jobs and have improved their earnings."

Yancey enjoys the program so much he hasn't missed a day since he started. "It's extremely rewarding for me to work with people so interested in improving themselves," he says. "My greatest satisfaction comes from helping people—period." ✔

—John O'Neil with additional reporting by Mary Kershaw

For more about these members and the NEA-Retired program, visit www.nea.org/retired.



Caroline Joe

The Problem With Mold

It's friendly outdoors, but inside schools, mold stinks—and it's making children sick.

After only her third day in the first grade at Andover Elementary School in Connecticut, Emilee O'Brien began getting sick. Over the next several months she battled everything from sore throats and ear infections to skin rashes and fatigue. She endured the removal of her tonsils and adenoids, and had a string of sinus infections so severe that, according to her mom, Renee O'Brien, her eyes turned "black and blue."

The culprit, it turns out, was mold-infested air from a contaminated crawlspace under her classroom. "It was just awful," says O'Brien, whose daughter missed nearly half of the 2001-02 school year because of her illnesses. "She's better now, but is so sensitive to mold that when she is around it she has severe reactions. I just tell her, 'If you see, smell, or taste it, get out!'"

Often called the "new asbestos," menacing mold problems are wreaking havoc on schools across the country and making thousands of students and school personnel sick. In many cases the victims don't even realize they're facing off with mold contamination, but they are clear about its often-debilitating effects. In addition to steep medical bills to families, the payoff to schools is often high absenteeism rates.

That's in part because mold exposure sets off increased episodes of asthma, which already account for over 10 million missed school days a year. Affected students who stay in classrooms with poor air quality, research shows, often suffer poor concentration and underperform.

Public awareness of indoor air quality issues is increasing, but more is yet to be learned about the effects of mold exposure. So what do we already know, and what can educators do toward prevention?

Linda Montgomery/Images.com

What *Is* It Anyway?

Molds are microscopic fungi that occur naturally in our environment—and they are virtually impossible to eliminate. While outdoor molds play an important role in breaking down dead organic matter, indoor molds offer no benefits and their growth should be prevented. The only effective way to do that is to control moisture. Common sources to watch include leaks or spills, uncontrolled humidity, flooding, or heavy condensation.

What's the Health Impact?

Research is ongoing, but all molds have the potential to cause adverse health effects. The most common symptoms of mold exposure are coughing, nasal or sinus congestion, sneezing, runny nose, headaches, skin rash, red or burning eyes, fatigue, and asthma attacks.

Children are at special risk to indoor air pollutants such as mold, because their lungs are not fully developed so they breathe in more air relative to their body weight than do adults. At even greater risk are students with respiratory illnesses or compromised immune systems. Still, everyone has a different reaction to mold, depending on the types of mold present, the extent of the exposure, and the individual's age and susceptibility level.

How Can I Protect My School?

- Be a moisture detective! Be on the lookout for condensation on windows, window sills, or cold water pipes; stained ceiling tiles, walls, or floors; leaks around classroom sinks; pungent, musty, mildew-like odors.
- Talk to the school nurse about health problems you notice your students experiencing in school.
- Report signs of excess moisture or mold growth to the school administration immediately. While national standards or "safe levels" for airborne concentrations of mold have not been established, if you see or smell mold, says the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), you almost certainly have a problem and testing is not necessary.
- Monitor the cleanup. When a moisture problem is discovered, the source of moisture should be eliminated and wet materials and furnishings dried within 24-48 hours. When mold is detected, it should be cleaned up according to EPA recommended guidelines, and any materials damaged by mold should be discarded.
- Be diligent. If your school ignores the problems, write the superintendent, if necessary. If the problem is still not addressed, contact your UniServ director. You may also want to involve parents or the PTA. For further help, consult EPA resources such as the IAQ Tools for Schools Kit and Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings available at www.epa.gov/iaq.

—Jennie Young
NEA Health Information Network

For More: Contact EPA's IAQ Info Clearinghouse at 800/438-4318 or Jennie Young at jyoung@nea.org.

What's Up at HIN?

NEA Health Information Network

SUPPORT FOR NEA MEMBERS ON MILITARY BASES

As the U.S. military deploys, NEA members working on base schools take on additional responsibilities, helping children and spouses left behind. HIN is conducting training for local NEA presidents working on military bases across the United States and for the Federal Education Association's Executive Board and FEA statewide members. This training provides support for these exceptional staff members while allowing members working at base schools to exchange model programs. HIN also provides training to assist these staff members with effective parent conferences. For more information, visit www.feaonline.org.

PLAIN TALK ON DRUGS

HIN is developing "Families Talk About Safe and Drug Free Schools," a workshop series for parents, based in part on the success of HIN's "Can We Talk?" program. The program will offer updates on safe and drug-free school programming, communication strategies, and community resources. It will be available in early 2004, but visit www.canwetalk.org for more.

REPORT ON STOLEN GUNS

HIN's Gun Safety Project partner, Americans for Gun Safety (AGS), reports in a recent study that gun theft rates are higher in states without laws requiring safe storage of firearms in the home. Gun theft rates are also higher in places with relatively large numbers of gun owners and where crime rates in general are relatively high. Based on FBI data, nearly 1.7 million guns have been reported stolen in the past 10 years, and only 40 percent of those were recovered. NEA, AGS, and the National Rifle Association advocate for safe storage. To access the report, "Stolen Guns: Arming the Enemy," visit www.agsfoundation.com or go to www.neahin.org/gunsafety.

Other NEA members love our great low rates and exclusive benefits. **You will too.**

The NEA *Platinum Plus*® Visa® Credit Card now offers an unbeatable 0% Introductory Annual Percentage Rate (APR) on balance transfers and cash advances for the first six months.† This great rate can help you save money like other NEA members on your high-interest payments. After that, you'll enjoy our lowest rate yet – a variable 9.4% APR.†

Additional exclusive *Platinum Plus* benefits you'll love include:

- **No annual fee** — you and members of your family pay nothing extra to carry this card.Δ
- **Automatic Purchase Protection** against damage or theft on most any thing bought with the card.*
- **Built-in insurance** coverages for travel, luggage and car rentals when you use the card to pay for your arrangements.*

0%
INTRO APR†

Even if you have another Visa Credit Card, you're still welcome to take advantage of this great offer. Don't wait to start saving with a low rate you'll be proud of!

Call for yours today **1-888-758-7946,**
mention priority code L4YP. TTY users, call 1-800-833-6262.

nea Member Benefits
www.neamb.com

PLATINUM PLUS
the new standard

†Annual fee for the NEA *Platinum Plus* and NEA School Days credit cards: None. The Indexed Annual Percentage Rates (APRs) for purchases and cash advances are 9.4% for the NEA *Platinum Plus* card and 11.35% for the NEA School Days card: each Indexed Rate APR may vary. The current introductory APR offer for all Cash Advance transactions (including Balance Transfers) made with either account is 0% through your first six statement closing dates effective upon the opening of your account. If your minimum monthly payment is late (*i.e.*, not received by 2 p.m., ET, on its Payment Due Date), or when the introductory APR expires, the non-introductory APR for your account ("Indexed Rate") is calculated using the Variable-Rate Information. If your payment is late, the Indexed Rate is applied to new and outstanding cash advance balances (consisting of Balance Transfer and Cash Advance Check transactions) as of the first day of the billing cycle in which the payment was late or not received. Transaction fee for Bank and ATM cash advances; credit card cash advance checks and balance transfers is 2% of each cash advance ($2 minimum, $30 maximum). Transaction fee for the purchase of wire transfers, person-to-person money transfers, money orders, bets, lottery tickets and casino gaming chips is 2% of each such purchase ($2 minimum, $30 maximum). **Transaction fees are waived on transactions requested with your application. MBNA allocates your payments to balances (including new transactions) with a 0% APR before balances with higher APRs.** Balance transfers and/or cash advances of any kind may not be used to pay off or pay down any other MBNA account. If your available credit cannot accommodate any transaction, fee and/or finance charge, the account will be subject to over-the-credit-limit costs. **REMINDER:** To obtain the benefits of the grace period for new purchases, you must pay your New Balance Total in full and on time.

*Certain restrictions apply to benefits. Details accompany new account materials. NEA School Days Card benefits differ from NEA *Platinum Plus* benefits (*e.g.*, purchase protection not available and coverage amounts are lower). Luggage and car rental coverage is supplemental. NEA School Days Card credit line runs from $500 to $5,000, while NEA *Platinum Plus* credit line is from $5,000 to $50,000 for eligible applicants.

ΔThe NEA Credit Card Program® has been developed for NEA members and their families only. Eligible NEA family members include parents, spouse or domestic partner, and children. If a member decides not to renew membership, that person and his/her family will no longer be eligible to receive the preferred rates, fees and special promotions offered through the NEA Credit Card Program. If eligible, a replacement card will be offered. Any account opened in response to this offer will be governed by the laws of Delaware.

The NEA is not involved in the credit decision process; standard credit procedure is followed. All applications will be subject to a confidential standard review by MBNA America.

Absolutely NO membership dues are used to market this program.

MBNA America Bank, N.A. is the issuer and administrator of this credit card program.

The information about the costs of the cards described in this application was accurate as of 3/2003. The information may have changed. To find out what may have changed, please call (888) 758-7946. TTY users please call (800) 833-6262.

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Your Dues Dollars

A Report from NEA Secretary-Treasurer Lily Eskelsen

As NEA Secretary-Treasurer, I am pleased to report figures taken from NEA's audited financial statements for the fiscal and membership year ended August 31, 2002. Once again NEA experienced a positive year in 2001–2002.

Not only did we increase membership by adding 43,333 new members to our organization this year, but also our General Operating Fund Unrestricted Net Assets increased by $1,345,994 as a result of net revenues exceeding expenses (Consolidated Net Assets increased by $4,132,719). The increase of Net Assets and continuous growth of new members add strength to our already fiscally sound organization that will enable us to build confidence in public education and to advocate for our members' needs. Each of you should be proud of your contribution in making the NEA strong and responsive to the students we serve and the people who spend their lives in public education.

The auditors' opinion letter stated that their work was performed in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. It was a "clean opinion" issued without any qualifying comments. An unqualified opinion is the best kind of opinion letter to receive.

The Consolidated Statements of Financial Position presents the Association's assets, liabilities, and net assets as of August 31, 2002. One important indicator of an organization's financial strength is the Net Assets (the difference between total assets and total liabilities). Net Assets should be a positive balance and sufficient not only to stabilize an organization in troubled times, but also to serve as a source of funds for special projects, future growth, and other fiscal demands as deemed appropriate. NEA's consolidated Net Asset Balance is now over $83.1 million. In addition, NEA has continuously demonstrated a positive Current Ratio, which means that NEA is in a solid position to meet current obligations by using cash and other current assets.

The General Operating Fund Statement of Activity and Changes in Net Assets reflects total Revenue and Expenses by Strategic Priorities for years 2002 and 2001.

Membership growth, fiscal stability and strength, and sound allocation of NEA's resources combined to make 2001–2002 an outstanding year for the National Education Association.

Note: A complete copy of the NEA audit report is available upon request.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
Consolidated Statements of Financial Position By Fund at August 31, 2002
With comparative totals as of August 31, 2001

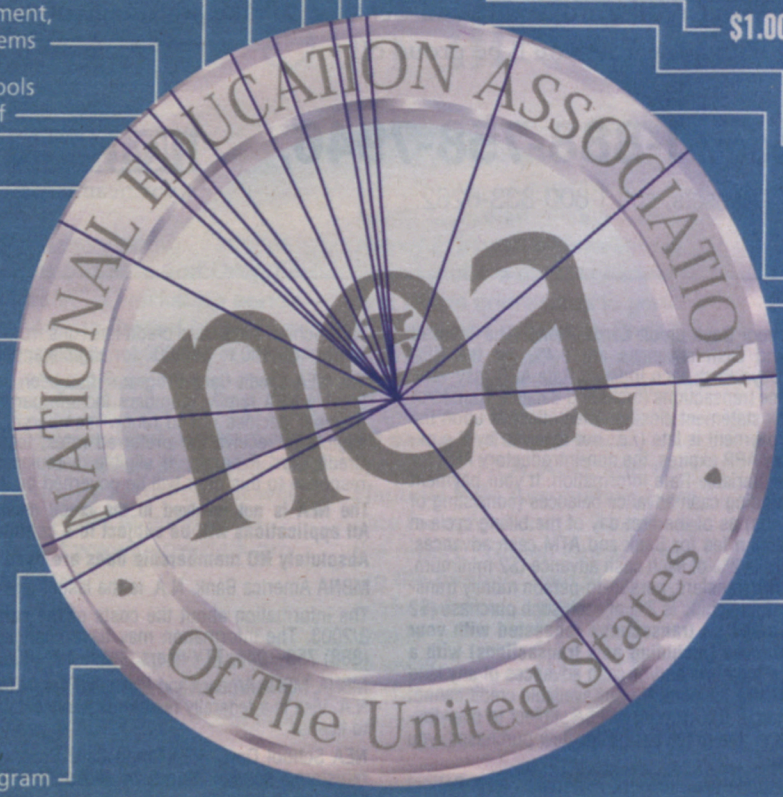
	General Operating Fund	Special Purpose Funds	Capital Improvement Fund	Consolidating Entries*	2002 Total Funds	2001 Total Funds
Current Assets	$62,570,416	$12,489,657	$ —	$ —	$ 75,060,073	$ 70,246,480
Long-term Assets	28,645,178	19,651,673	51,248,673	(11,521,312)	88,024,212	91,539,743
Total Assets	$91,215,594	$32,141,330	$51,248,673	$(11,521,312)	$163,084,285	$161,786,223
Current Liabilities	$22,953,153	$ 8,617,366	$ 2,647,439	$ —	$ 34,217,958	$ 35,167,333
Long-term Liabilities	10,905,884	10,208,121	31,084,169	(6,437,663)	45,760,511	47,645,793
Total Liabilities	33,859,037	18,825,487	33,731,608	(6,437,663)	79,978,469	82,813,126
Unrestricted Net Assets						
Undesignated Net Assets	38,506,656	13,315,843	17,517,065	(5,083,649)	64,255,915	54,873,196
Net Assets Designated for Postretirement Benefits	18,849,901	—	—	—	18,849,901	24,099,901
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	57,356,557	13,315,843	17,517,065	(5,083,649)	83,105,816	78,973,097
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	$91,215,594	$32,141,330	$51,248,673	$(11,521,312)	$163,084,285	$161,786,223

*All intercompany accounts and transactions have been eliminated in consolidation.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
General Operating Fund - Statement of Activity and Changes in Net Assets
Year Ended August 31, 2002 and 2001

	2002	2001
Total Revenue	$261,343,513	$244,676,421
Expenses By Strategic Priorities:		
Student Achievement – Provide students with the skills and knowledge to function successfully in school	4,620,085	4,140,961
Teacher Quality – Ensure a qualified teacher in every classroom	4,311,032	3,735,301
School System Capacity – Build learning environments that support student success	6,685,347	7,204,222
Public, Parental, and Business Support – Promote stronger public, parental, and business support for public education	35,944,568	33,878,002
Association Capacity Building – Mobilize at the local, state, and national levels for the resources basic to quality schools	121,318,441	112,286,866
Administrative Services and Program Support – Provide the administrative and programmatic support vital to the achievement of NEA's goals	87,118,046	81,098,347
Total Unrestricted Expenses	259,997,519	242,343,699
Changes in Net Assets from Operating Activities	1,345,994	2,332,722
Unrestricted Net Assets, Beginning of Year	56,010,563	53,677,841
Unrestricted Net Assets, End of Year	$ 57,356,557	$ 56,010,563

The following is a breakdown of how the $130.00 NEA dues dollars for 2002-2003 are allocated to support and represent members and affiliates in their efforts to achieve the mission of the NEA.



$2.40 Provide strategies for school improvement

$3.78 Advocate for qualified teachers in every classroom

$2.43 Improve ESP professional development, evaluation and compensation systems

$1.52 Advocate for safe and orderly schools and facilities for students and staff

$.88 Promote school construction and modernization

$5.24 Establish new partnerships with diverse groups and businesses

$11.52 Build bipartisan support for public education, including support of actions on initiatives and legislation

$6.58 Establish NEA's public image as an advocate for quality public schools

$2.40 Recruit and retain members in all categories

$35.36 Support the UniServ Staffing Program

$3.25 Improve students' readiness and motivation to learn and achieve

$.97 Provide contingency funding for emergencies at national, state, and local levels

$1.00 Provide funding for growth of the NFIE Endowment Fund

$8.50 Implement a governance process that fosters member participation and democratic decision-making

$11.14 Produce communications that provide a common understanding of Association priorities

$13.09 Support pro-public education coalition and commit to affirmative action, diversity, and member rights

$19.94 Expand advocacy programs for members, including legal protection

NEA Members Insurance Trust Plan

2001 Summary Annual Report

(Trust Plan Year Beginning September 1, 2001)

The following is the summary annual report for the NEA Members Insurance Trust® Plan (Trust), Employer Identification Number 52-1126682, including information for NEA Life Insurance® Program, NEA Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance Program, and NEA DUES-TAB® for period beginning September 1, 2001, and ending August 31, 2002. The annual report has been filed with the Internal Revenue Service, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

BASIC NEA MEMBERS INSURANCE TRUST FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The value of Trust assets, after subtracting liabilities of the Trust was **$80,064,357** as of August 31, 2002, compared to **$82,864,103** as of September 1, 2001. During the Trust year, the Trust experienced a decrease in its net assets of **$2,799,746**. This decrease includes unrealized appreciation and depreciation in the value of Trust assets; that is, the difference between the value of the Trust assets at the end of the year and the value of the assets at the beginning of the year or the cost of assets acquired during the year. During the Trust year, the Trust had total income of **$73,987,420** including participant contributions of **$60,335,564**, realized losses of **$12,416,548** from the sale of assets, and earnings from investments of **$4,868,493**.

Trust expenses were **$76,787,166**. These expenses included benefits paid to participants and beneficiaries, administrative and other expenses.

INFORMATION FOR NEA LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAM

The Trust has a contract with The Prudential Insurance Company of America to pay all NEA Life Insurance claims incurred under the terms of this program. The total contributions for the Trust plan year beginning September 1, 2001, and ending August 31, 2002, were **$36,427,826**.

Because it is a so called "experienced rated" contract, the premium costs are affected by, among other things, the number and size of claims. Of the total contributions made for the Trust year ending August 31, 2002, the contributions made under such "experienced-rated" contract were **$36,427,826** and the total of all benefit claims paid under the contract during the Trust year was **$33,413,072**.

INFORMATION FOR NEA ACCIDENTAL DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT (AD&D) PROGRAM

The Trust has a contract with The Prudential Insurance Company of America to pay all NEA AD&D claims incurred under the terms of the Trust. The total contributions for the Trust year beginning September 1, 2001, and ending August 31, 2002 were **$2,739,447.**

Because it is a so called "experienced rated" contract, the premium costs are affected by, among other things, the number and size of claims. Of the total contributions made for the Trust year ending August 31, 2002, the contributions made under such "experienced-rated" contract were **$2,739,447** and the total of all benefit claims paid under the contract during the Trust year was **$2,436,659**.

INFORMATION FOR NEA DUES-TAB PROGRAM

The Trust has a contract with The Prudential Insurance Company of America to pay all NEA DUES-TAB claims incurred under the terms of the Trust. The total contributions for the Trust year beginning September 1, 2001 and ending August 31, 2002 were **$2,328,562.**

Of the total contributions made for the Trust year ending August 31, 2002, the contributions made were **$2,328,562** and the total of all benefit claims paid under the contract during the Trust year was **$1,992,891**. Benefits charged, less benefit claims paid, were **($73,343)** which is comprised of incurred but unreported claims and a pooled claim charge. Trust expenses, less benefit claims paid, were **$63,314** in premium taxes and **$151,014** in other expenses.

The NEA DUES-TAB program is self-supporting and paid by premiums from the NEA Members Insurance Trust funds rather than from Member contributions.

INFORMATION FOR NEA MEMBERCARE MEDICARE SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM

The total contributions for the Trust plan year beginning September 1, 2000, and ending August 31, 2001, were **$6,267,051**. The total number of participants was **5,007**.

Additional Information

As a participant, you have the right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof for a reasonable charge or you may inspect the Annual Report without charge at the office of NEA Members Insurance Trust, c/o NEA Member Benefits, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 or at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, D.C. You also have the right to receive from the Trust Administrator, on request and at no charge, a statement of the assets and liabilities of the Trust and accompanying notes, or a statement of income and expenses of the Trust and accompanying notes, or both. The Administrator will state the charge, if any, of the specific document you request so you can find out the cost before ordering.

DTNT0203

The 2003 NEA Representative Assembly

This July, more than 9,000 NEA members elected by their state and local colleagues will gather in New Orleans, Louisiana, for the annual NEA Representative Assembly (RA), July 3-6. The RA is the Association's highest decision-making body. Delegates will be voting on the proposed amendments listed below, as well as electing an officer and two members of the Executive Committee. You can follow the RA action by going online to www.nea.org. On the website will be complete, day-to-day coverage of RA debates and action, plus audio and text versions of major RA addresses.

Proposed Amendments to The NEA Standing Rules, Constitution, and Bylaws for vote by the 2003 Representative Assembly

Proposed deletions are shown in ([ ]); proposed additions are underscored.

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 1

TITLE: To require that new business items introduced by petition of at least fifty (50) delegates for consideration by the Representative Assembly must first be subject to a vote of approval or disapproval by the sponsor's state affiliate representative assembly or equivalent or state affiliate caucus and that the outcome of this vote be communicated to delegates.

Rule 6. Order of Business and Debate
K.
(Third paragraph; no earlier changes)

New business items shall be submitted to the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules no later than 12 noon on the second day of the Representative Assembly and shall be submitted (1) by petition of at least fifty (50) delegates, only after it has been presented to the state NEA delegation or the state Representative Assembly or equivalent of the individual who is submitting the new business item. After this presentation, the body to which the new business item has been presented will vote to support or oppose this new business item. This recommendation will then be listed in *RA Today* with the submission. For a new business item to be submitted in this manner, it must have the signature of either the chair of that state's delegation or the president of the state association of the individual submitting the new business item. This signature only attests to the fact that the state's NEA delegation or that state's representative assembly or equivalent has been presented with the new business item. New business items submitted in this manner will be reported in *RA Today* in the following manner, "submitted by: (individual's name), with the (support or opposition) of the state delegation or state Association representative assembly or equivalent."

(2) by a majority vote of those present and voting at a state delegation at a regularly called meeting of the delegation in connection with the Annual Meeting, (3) by a governance body of the NEA or a state or local affiliate, or (4) by the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules pursuant to Rule 8.G. The material shall be made available to the chairperson of each delegation on the following morning prior to the beginning of the Representative Assembly. Such material shall include a brief written rationale for each new business item.

(No further changes)

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This amendment would add to the Standing Rules the requirement that, before submission to the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules for consideration by the Representative Assembly, new business items sponsored by a petition of at least fifty (50) delegates be submitted to either the sponsor's state delegation to the NEA Representative Assembly or to the sponsor's state affiliate representative assembly or equivalent for consideration. The state affiliate delegation or representative assembly or equivalent would be asked to vote to support or oppose the item and, should it do so, the outcome of that vote would be noted on the new business item when submitted to the Committee and when reported in *RA Today*. According to the language of the amendment, new business items submitted by petition of at least fifty (50) Representative Assembly delegates that had received a vote of support or opposition from the sponsor's state delegation or representative assembly or equivalent could be submitted to the Representative Assembly. New business items on which the state delegation or representative assembly or equivalent had taken no position or those not subjected to a vote could not be submitted. Standing Rule 6.K permits the submission of new business items to the Representative Assembly by three methods other than the petition of at least fifty (50) delegates: by a majority vote of those present and voting at a state delegation in connection with the Annual Meeting, by a governance body of the NEA or a state or local affiliate, or by the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules pursuant to Rule 8.G. The amendment would not apply to these other three submission methods.

When a new business item is submitted to the Committee for consideration by the Representative Assembly, a signature of the chair of the sponsor's state delegation to the Representative Assembly or the signature of the president of the sponsor's state affiliate would attest to the fact that the item had been reviewed as required. When reported in *RA Today*, the text of the new business item would indicate whether the state delegation or representative assembly or equivalent had voted to support or to oppose the item.

If adopted, this amendment would require minor changes to the form used by delegates to submit new business items. It is the intent of the sponsor that the amendment become effective for new business items considered by the 2004 Representative Assembly.

Contact person: Dakota Draper, North Dakota

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 2

TITLE: To require that, beginning with the fifth business session, the Representative Assembly not recess for the day until half of all remaining new business items have been acted upon.

Rule 6. Order of Business and Debate
K.

New business relating to substantive policies or programs for the Association shall be specific in nature and terminal in application.

New business items submitted prior to May 1 shall be sent to the president and executive director of each state affiliate as soon as possible. Those items submitted after May 1 but prior to June 15 shall be included in the delegate packets given to delegates at registration.

New business items shall be submitted to the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules no later than 12 noon on the second day of the Representative Assembly and shall be submitted (1) by petition of at least fifty (50) delegates, (2) by a majority vote of those present and voting at a state delegation at a regularly called meeting of the delegation in connection with the Annual Meeting, (3) by a governance body of the NEA or a state or local affiliate, or (4) by the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules pursuant to Rule 8.G. The material shall be made available to the chairperson of each delegation on the following morning prior to the beginning of the Representative Assembly. Such material shall include a brief written rationale for each new business item.

Each new business item shall be printed accompanied by the name of the submitting NEA, state, or local group and shall be accompanied by the name and state of the contact person.

Items of new business submitted in accordance with this section shall be the first business item at all business meetings except the first business meeting of the Representative Assembly. These new business items shall be considered for at least one hour at the second business meeting and for at least 90 minutes at each subsequent meeting. However, beginning with the fifth business session, the Representative Assembly shall not recess for the day until half of the remaining new business items filed in accordance with the rules have been acted upon.

(No further changes)

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This amendment would prohibit the Representative Assembly, beginning with the fifth business meeting, which occurs on the morning of the third day that the Assembly meets, from recessing for the day until half of the new business items yet to be considered had been acted upon. Standing Rule 6.K. specifies that the deadline for submission of new business items is noon of the second day of the Representative Assembly. Rule 6.K. also requires that new business items be considered for at least one hour at the second business meeting of the Representative Assembly and for at least 90 minutes at each subsequent meeting. This amendment would retain these requirements but add that, beginning with the fifth business meeting, half of all remaining new business items be considered before the Representative Assembly could recess for the day. A similar amendment prohibiting the Representative Assembly from recessing for the day until half of the remaining new business items printed in that day's edition of *RA Today* had been acted upon—but beginning with the first rather than with the fifth business meeting—was defeated by the 2002 Representative Assembly.

As an illustration of the amendment's possible impact, shown below are the number of new business items that would need to be acted upon each day, based upon the number of items still awaiting consideration from the fifth business meeting of the 2002 Representative Assembly onward.

Bus. Meeting/ Date	Number of NBIs not yet considered	Computation	Minimum number of NBIs considered
July 4 (beg. of 5th bus. meeting)	55	Half of 55=28	28
July 5	27	Remaining new business items	27

Contact Person: Michael Cohan, New Jersey

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 3

TITLE: To require that, whenever amendments to action items can be continuously displayed for the delegates, they be displayed until acted upon.

Rule 6. Order of Business and Debate
(no previous changes)
(new) **T.** When an amendment to any action item can be displayed for the view of delegates on the monitors/screens, it shall be continually displayed in a full or split screen format until the amendment has been acted upon.
[T.] U. Any person, chairperson, or member who is presenting a committee report shall not speak more than five (5) minutes unless permission is granted by majority vote of the Representative Assembly.
[U.] V. The object to consideration motion shall be in order only immediately after the maker of the motion has had the opportunity to speak to it.
[V.] W. The vote on a motion to refer shall be in order only after the maker of the original motion has been given the opportunity to speak to the referral.

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This amendment would add a requirement to Standing Rule 6. that, whenever an amendment to an action item being considered by the Representative Assembly "can be displayed," the language of the amendment will be shown to delegates on all monitors and display screens continuously while the amendment is being considered. The reference to displaying amendment language on a "split screen" would, presumably, allow other images to be shown on half the screen while the language of the amendment is continuously displayed on the other half. Representative Assembly action items include new business items, the NEA Legislative Program, NEA resolutions, and other reports, policy statements, etc. that are open to amendment during consideration by the Representative Assembly.

Under current practice, most—but not all—amendments to action items are displayed to delegates. To ensure that language of a particular amendment is displayed, the sponsor writes the text of the amendment on a motion form obtained from the Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules Committee table at the foot of the Representative Assembly stage and submits it to the Committee. The purpose of this is to ensure that the text is available for display to the delegates and that the presiding officer and parliamentarian have advance knowledge of the amendment. Some delegates, however, do not submit the texts of their amendments in advance. The amendment text that has been submitted in advance is displayed on the overhead screens and television monitors when the amendment is first offered, removed during debate, and displayed again at the time of a vote on the amendment.

Some amendment texts are lengthy and, if the amendment were adopted and the texts were displayed continually during debate, the font size would need to be reduced or the text would have to be scrolled for all of the language to be displayed to the delegates. It should be noted in this regard that many delegates view the Representative Assembly proceedings on the 27-inch television monitors closest to their delegation.

Contact Person: Joyce Powell, New Jersey

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 3A

TITLE: To establish an order for the consideration of new business items by the Representative Assembly based on sponsorship of the item and to modify the Representative Assembly process for consideration of new business items.

Rule 6. Order of Business and Debate.
(no earlier changes)
N. [New business of the Association presented at the direction of the Board of Directors may be debated and acted upon at any business meeting of the Representative Assembly.] At any business meeting of the Representative Assembly at which new business items submitted by the NEA Board of Directors ("Board of Directors new business items") and/or by a majority vote of those present and voting at a state delegation at a regularly called meeting of the delegation in connection with the Annual Meeting or by a governance body of a state affiliate ("State new business items") are ready to be acted upon, the order of business shall be as follows:

1. Board of Directors new business items shall be acted upon before any other new business items; and
2. State new business items shall be acted upon after Board of Directors new business items and before any other new business items. As among State new business items themselves, they shall be acted upon in the order in which they are submitted.

U. [*The object to consideration* motion shall be in order only immediately after the maker of the motion has had the opportunity to speak to it.] After a new business item is introduced and seconded, the maker of the motion shall be allowed one (1) minute to explain why the new business item should be considered. The maker may not during this one (1) minute speak to the merits of the new business item. The Chair then shall put the following question to the body: Do you wish to consider this new business item?

If a majority of those voting vote to consider the new business item, it shall be debated and acted upon in accordance with the regular procedure, except that an object to consideration motion shall not be in order. If a majority of those voting do not vote to consider the new business item it shall be withdrawn.

(new) W. If a motion to close debate has not been placed before the Representative Assembly within fifteen (15) minutes after it has begun consideration of a new business item, the Chair shall allow the person speaking at the fifteen (15) minute mark to conclude his or her remarks and then shall ask the body if it wishes to close debate. If at least two-thirds (2/3) of those voting vote in the affirmative, debate shall be closed and the body shall vote on the new business item. If the vote to close debate fails, debate shall continue.

(no further changes)

IMPACT STATEMENT:

The amendment would establish an order for consideration of new business items by the Representative Assembly by (1) making explicit the current practice of acting first on new business items submitted by the NEA Board of Directors (a practice now based on the general language in Standing Rule 6.N, which allows such new business items to be "acted upon at any business meeting of the Representative Assembly"), (2) providing that items submitted by a majority vote of those present and voting at a regularly called meeting of a state affiliate delegation to the Annual Meeting or by a state affiliate governance body be acted upon second in the order submitted, and (3) providing that all other new business items be acted upon third.

The amendment would require that consideration of new business items by the Representative Assembly begin with one minute for the item's sponsor to give reasons that the item should be considered. During this time, the sponsor would be permitted to speak to the reasons for consideration only and not to enter into debate about the merits of the issue. The Representative Assembly would then, by a majority vote, decide whether to consider the item or to move on. If the Representative Assembly votes to consider the item, debate will go forward in accordance with regular procedure, except that a motion to object to consideration will not be in order. If the Representative Assembly votes not to consider the item, the item will be withdrawn and the Representative Assembly will turn to consideration of the next item on the agenda.

If no motion to close debate has been offered after fifteen minutes of debate on any item, the Representative Assembly would be required to vote on whether or not to close debate. If two-thirds of those voting vote in the affirmative, debate will end and the Representative Assembly will immediately vote on passage of the new business item. Consistent with past practice, the passage of a motion to close debate would close all matters pending before the Representative Assembly with respect to the new business item in question.

If approved, the amendment would become effective at the Representative Assembly of 2004.

Contact Person: Penny Kotterman, Arizona

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 4

TITLE: To allow a motion to object to consideration of a new business item only when the item has not been supported by the sponsoring delegates' state delegation.

Rule 6. Order of Business and Debate
(no previous changes)
U. The *object to consideration* motion shall be in order only immediately after the maker of the motion has had the opportunity to speak to it. This shall only apply to new business items that have not been approved for support by the delegate's (sponsor) state caucus.

(no further changes)

IMPACT STATEMENT:

While the language of this amendment can be read to refer solely to when a motion to object to consideration can be made, the intent of the author of this amendment appears to be to ensure that the motion to object to consideration only be in order for items that have not received prior approval by the sponsoring delegate's state affiliate caucus. Consequently, the Committee reads "this" as referring to the offering of an object to consideration motion generally, rather than the narrower construction of when such a motion can be made. Thus new business items that have received approval by the sponsoring delegate's state caucus would not be subject to the object to consideration motion as under the current rules. Standing Rule 6.B. specifies that matters not specifically governed by the Standing Rules be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. This proposed change in the Standing Rules would supersede *Robert's* with regard to the object to consideration motion when a new business item has not been previously approved by the state delegation caucus of the sponsoring delegate and *Robert's* would govern the object to consideration motion otherwise.

Standing Rule 6.K. specifies that new business items may be submitted by:

(1) a petition of at least 50 delegates,
(2) a majority vote of those present and voting at a state delegation at a regularly called meeting of the delegation in connection with the Annual Meeting,
(3) a governance body of the NEA or a state or local affiliate or
(4) by the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules.

The information about whether or not a new business item has the support of its sponsor's state delegation would already be present on the submission form for new business items moved according to (2), above, but would need to be present for the other modes of submission.

Contact Person: Gerald Conefrey, Massachusetts

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 5

TITLE: To require that the maker of a motion to object to consideration state the reason for the objection.

Rule 6. Order of Business and Debate
(no previous changes)

U. The object to consideration motion shall be in order only immediately after the maker of the motion has had the opportunity to speak to it. The maker shall state his or her reason for objecting to consideration.

(no further changes)

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This amendment would add a requirement to the Standing Rules that a delegate objecting to consideration of an item before the Representative Assembly be required to state the reason for the objection. Consistent with Standing Rule 6.B, as this situation is not addressed specifically by the Standing Rules, *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised* governs the conduct of the Representative Assembly related to objections to consideration. According to *Roberts*, the delegate raising the objection is not permitted to state the reason for the objection and the Assembly moves immediately to a vote on whether or not the item receiving the objection will be considered. If the amendment is adopted, *Roberts* would be superseded by the new provision in this regard.

Contact Person: Ron Miller, Massachusetts and Darlene Roker, California

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 6

TITLE: To require that any procedural motion offered at the Representative Assembly not germane to the issue or item being debated at the time the motion is offered not be accepted by the presiding officer until after consideration of the current issue or item is completed.

Rule 6. Order of Business and Debate
(no section given)

Procedural motions not germane to the current issue or item under debate shall not be accepted by the chair until after that issue or item has been dealt with by the body.

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This amendment would add language to the Standing Rules specifying that any procedural motion not germane to the issue or item being debated by the Representative Assembly be held by the presiding officer and not considered until after consideration of the issue or item being debated is completed. The amendment sponsor notes "motions to reconsider previously discussed business or to suspend the rules or limit debate on all further items" as examples of procedural motions not germane. Examples of procedural motions that would be permissible include those to close or limit debate on the specific issue or item being considered by the Assembly at that time. Consistent with Standing Rule 6.B., such matters are governed by *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised*, as this area is not specifically addressed by the Standing Rules. Currently, procedural motions are considered after the Representative Assembly completes consideration of one issue or item and before the Assembly begins consideration of another, although privileged procedural motions may occur before the disposition of the matter under consideration.

Contact Person: Devin Gruver, Washington

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 7

TITLE: To give the Board of Directors broad powers to develop a process for submission and consideration of new business items at the NEA Representative Assembly.

Rule 6. Order of Business and Debate
(new) **W.** The Board of Directors shall adopt such procedures as it deems necessary and appropriate to (1) limit the number of new business items submitted to the Representative Assembly for consideration and (2) expedite the processing of those new business items that are submitted. These procedures shall be implemented without further action by the Representative Assembly. To the extent there is a conflict between this section and any other section of Standing Rule 6, this section shall take precedence.

IMPACT STATEMENT:

As written, this amendment would give broad powers to the Board of Directors with regard to procedures for the submission and consideration of new business items. The amendment was proposed in this form by the Board of Directors at its meeting of February 2003 to ensure submission in time for the March 1, 2003 deadline for Standing Rule amendments to be considered by the 2003 Representative Assembly. The Board may offer language to narrow the scope of the amendment.

Contact: NEA Board of Directors

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 7A

TITLE: To require that recommendations in NEA committee reports to the Representative Assembly be identified as new business items, legislative amendments, resolutions, or action items for the Executive Committee or Board of Directors and to require that recommendations be presented to the respective organizational structure.

Rule 7. Reports
D. Report Format

Reports of committees shall be in a format, prescribed by the president, which provides for a separation of explanatory, background, or introductory report information from any recommendations the Assembly is to act upon. All report recommendations shall be identified as new business, legislative amendments, resolutions, or action items for the Board of Directors/Executive Committee, and will be presented for action in proper form to the respective organizational structure.

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This amendment would modify the process under which recommendations in committee reports of the Association or the Representative Assembly are presented to and acted upon by the Representative Assembly.

The amendment would require that all recommendations in committee reports be placed into one of four categories: amend-

ments to the NEA Legislative Program, resolutions, new business items, or "action items for the Board/Executive Committee." The recommendations would then be presented to the "respective organizational structure" for further consideration before receiving action by the Representative Assembly.

Should the amendment be approved, an administrative process would need to be created for the assignment of committee recommendations to one of the four categories described, for the editing of the recommendations, as needed, into "proper form," and for presentation of the recommendations to the Legislative Committee, the Resolutions Committee, the Representative Assembly or the "Board of Directors/Executive Committee."

Contact Person: Don Dawson, California

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 8

TITLE: To limit the duration of any speech to the Representative Assembly, with two exceptions, to no more than 15 minutes.

(new) **Rule 8.**
A. Except for the keynote address by the President of the Association, and any address by the President of the United States, no speech delivered at the Representative Assembly shall exceed fifteen (15) minutes in length.
(Current Rule 8. will be designated "Rule 9."and all subsequent rules renumbered.)

IMPACT STATEMENT:
This amendment would require that no speeches to the Representative Assembly exceed fifteen minutes in length. The only exceptions would be the keynote address of the NEA President and any speech by the President of the United States. All speeches, with the two exceptions noted, would need to be timed to ensure that they not exceed the fifteen-minute limit. Speakers would need to be notified about speaking time elapsed and advised when their time had expired. A procedure would need to be developed to enforce the time limit with the wide range of leaders and guests who address the Representative Assembly, including the National Teacher of the Year, the NEA Education Support Professional of the Year, the recipient of the annual NEA Friend of Education Award, the President of Education International, candidates for President of the United States and other federal offices, and newly elected or outgoing officers giving speeches of appreciation and/or farewell. This limitation would not apply to comments, reports, or remarks given in the course of conducting the business of the Representative Assembly.

Contact Person: Michael Cohan, New Jersey

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 8A

TITLE: To charge the Internal Editing Committee of the NEA Resolutions Committee with ensuring that NEA resolutions be changed as needed to bring them into conformity with positions taken in policy statements adopted by the Representative Assembly and to create a new Standing Rule with regard to NEA policy statements that includes a definition; rules for submission, consideration, and amendment by the Representative Assembly; and a process for reconciliation with other policy documents.

Rule 8. Definition of Resolutions, Committee, and Procedure
C. Internal Editing Committee
(no earlier changes)
(new) **6.** To make such changes in the adopted resolutions of the Association as may be necessary to accommodate the positions taken in policy statements adopted by the Representative Assembly. Such changes shall be made promptly after the policy statements have been adopted and shall be reported to the Resolutions Committee for information at its winter meeting.

(new) **Rule 9. Policy Statements**

A. Purpose A policy statement shall set forth NEA's positions with regard to a particular subject and may include expressions of opinion, intent, or belief; may call for actions that are specific in nature and terminal in application; and may indicate support for or opposition to federal legislation.

B. Submission and Consideration of Proposed Policy Statements A proposed policy statement may be submitted to the Representative Assembly only by the Board of Directors. The proposed policy statement, together with the committee report upon which it is based, shall be sent to delegates in the advance mailing for the Annual Meeting.
A proposed policy statement shall be presented to the Representative Assembly for consideration at the time designated in the official program.

C. Effect of Adopted Policy Statements If a policy statement is adopted by the Representative Assembly, any resolution, new business item, or provision in the Legislative Program that deals with the subject addressed in the policy statement shall be editorially changed to accommodate the positions taken in the policy statement. Any resolution, new business item, or provision in the Legislative Program that deals with a subject addressed in an adopted policy statement shall be accompanied by a notation indicating that NEA's position with regard to the subject in question is set forth in full in the policy statement and that the policy statement is controlling and supersedes all other NEA pronouncements dealing with that subject.
An adopted policy statement shall continue in force unless and until further action is taken with regard to that policy statement by a subsequent Representative Assembly.

D. Amending Adopted and Proposed Statements The Executive Committee shall review all adopted policy statements each year to assure that they continue to serve the contemporary needs and interests of NEA. In conducting this review, the Executive Committee may seek input from NEA members, affiliates, and constituency groups.
The Executive Committee shall report the results of its review, including any recommendations that the Executive Committee may wish to make for amending the adopted policy statements, to the Board of Directors at the Board's May meeting. Any amendments to the adopted policy statements approved by the Board of Directors shall be submitted to the Representative Assembly for action.
A copy of all adopted policy statements, including any amendments approved by the Board of Directors for submission to the Representative Assembly, shall be sent to delegates in the advance mailing for the Annual Meeting.
Amendments to adopted and proposed policy statements may be submitted to the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules after the opening of the Representative Assembly until noon on the second day of the Representative Assembly by (1) petition of at least fifty (50) delegates, (2) a majority vote of those present and voting at a state delegation at a regularly called meeting of the delegation in connection with the Annual Meeting, or (3) a governance body of a state or local affiliate. Such amendments shall be in writing on the form provided and shall be accompanied by a brief written rationale.
If a new business item, an amendment to the Legislative Program, or an amendment to a resolution that is submitted to the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules would have the effect of changing a position taken in an adopted or a proposed policy statement, the Committee shall treat the submission as an amendment to the policy statement and it shall be acted upon when policy statements are being considered by the Representative Assembly.
Amendments to adopted and proposed policy statements shall be considered by the Representative Assembly at the time designated in the official program. The Representative Assembly shall deal with proposed policy statements first and then shall deal with amendments to adopted policy statements. In this latter regard, the Representative Assembly shall deal with each adopted policy statement separately, acting first on any amendments to the policy statement in question submitted by the Board of Directors and then acting on any other amendments to that policy statement.

IMPACT STATEMENT:
This amendment would make changes in two areas of the Standing Rules, first giving the Internal Editing Committee of the NEA Resolutions Committee responsibility for changing the resolutions to accommodate positions taken in NEA policy statements and second creating a new Standing Rule on NEA policy statements.
The amendment would charge the Internal Editing Committee of the NEA Resolutions Committee with the responsibility for changing the resolutions as needed to accommodate positions taken in policy statements approved by the Representative Assembly. These changes would be made promptly after the adoption of any policy statements affecting them and would be presented as information at the Resolutions Committee's winter meeting.
The amendment would also create a new Standing Rule concerning NEA policy statements. The rule would define the term "policy statement" and outline a process for the submission and consideration of policy statements by the Board of Directors with subsequent approval by the Representative Assembly. The NEA Executive Committee would be required to review policy statements annually for timeliness and to report to the Board of Directors with recommendations for changes as needed. Policy statements would supersede statements of policy in other forms such as new business items, resolutions, or provisions in the Legislative Program, and these documents would be editorially changed as needed to conform to policy statements affecting them. Amendments to policy statements could be submitted to the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules until noon of the second day of the Representative Assembly.
If approved, the amendments would become effective at the Representative Assembly of 2004.

Contact Person: Penny Kotterman, Arizona

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 8B

TITLE: To implement recommendations of the NEA Special Committee on the Establishment of Policy with regard to the development, application, and monitoring of NEA policy statements.

(new) **Rule 9. Policy Statements**

A. The Board of Directors shall determine when to use a policy statement to establish NEA policy, shall assign responsibility for developing the policy statement in question to an appropriate committee, and shall give the committee its charge.

B. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for monitoring policy statements to assure that they continue to serve the contemporary needs and interests of NEA and shall recommend to the Board of Directors such changes in policy statements is it deems necessary and appropriate. The Board of Directors shall act on the Executive Committee's recommendations, and the Board of Directors' actions shall be presented to the Representative Assembly.

(Subsequent Standing Rules will be renumbered.)

IMPACT STATEMENT:
As written, this amendment would give broad powers to the Board of Directors with regard to policy statements. The amendment was proposed in this form by the Board of Directors at its meeting of February 2003 to ensure submission in time for the March 1, 2002 deadline for Standing Rule amendments to be considered by the 2003 Representative Assembly. The Board may offer language to narrow the scope of the amendment.

Contact: NEA Board of Directors

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 9

TITLE: To require that elections and voting on amendments at the Representative Assembly not be conducted at times when the Assembly is considering new business.

Rule 10. Elections, Committee and Procedure
H. Elections
1. (no changes)
2. Elections on the first ballot shall be on the second day of the Representative Assembly. Polls for voting on the first ballot shall be open [from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon] at designated times other than when there is action on new business items on election day at such place or places as the President may designate. (No further changes in 2.)
3. Runoff elections shall be held as necessary until there is an election for each position by a majority vote, but not during times assigned for action on new business items. Notice of runoff elections shall be given by the chairperson of the Elections Committee from the platform during a regularly scheduled business meeting of the Representative Assembly. The chairperson of the Elections Committee shall set, subject to approval by the Representative Assembly, the hours for all runoff elections. The chairperson of the Elections Committee shall authorize a runoff election by mail ballot of the certified delegates, if it becomes necessary, to assure elections by majority vote.
4. – 8 (no changes)
9. Polls for voting on amendments shall be open [from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon] at designated times other than when there is action on new business items during the fifth business meeting, on the third day of the Representative Assembly at such place or places as the President shall designate.
(no further changes)

IMPACT STATEMENT:
This amendment would require that polls be open for voting only when the Representative Assembly is not considering new business.

Voting to elect NEA executive officers, members of the NEA Executive Committee and at-large members of the Board of Directors currently occurs on the morning of the second day of the Representative Assembly. Voting on amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws and runoff elections, if any, occur on the morning of the third day and runoff elections may continue into the fourth day if necessary. Standing Rule 6.K. requires that the Representative Assembly begin with at least one hour on the consideration of new business at the second business meeting—which is the afternoon of the Assembly's first day—and at least 90 minutes at each subsequent meeting. Polls need to be open for at least 3 hours to ensure that all of the Assembly's nearly 10,000 delegates have the opportunity to vote.
As the morning business session on the Representative Assembly's second day must begin with at least 90 minutes on new business, the amendment would require that the 3 hours for voting on the second and third days of the Representative Assembly be scheduled for either before the morning business meeting begins, during the break between the morning and afternoon meetings, or during the morning or afternoon meetings after the Representative Assembly has completed the required minimum ninety minutes of work on new business. In each instance, inserting the 3 hours required to complete voting would result in significant delays in the daily schedule.
Scheduling the voting before the morning business session would conflict with morning state delegation caucus meetings and require opening the polls at approximately 6:30 a.m. for voting to be complete before the Representative Assembly convenes at 10:00 a.m. with the minimum 90 minutes of work on new business. Elections Committee members need approximately one hour to prepare the polls and test the voting machines so would need to begin work at 5:30 a.m.
Scheduling the voting for after the completion of the required 90 minutes of action on new business during the morning business meeting would probably delay the beginning of the afternoon business meetings on the second and third days for several hours, as the meetings are required to begin with work on new business and this could not occur until the voting concludes. Scheduling the 3 hours for voting during an afternoon meeting after action on new business is concluded would create conflicts with other evening delegate activities already scheduled.

Contact Person: Steven Karpiak, Michigan

STANDING RULE AMENDMENT 10

TITLE: To prohibit the use of cellular telephones or other audible communications devices by delegates in the Representative Assembly

Rule 12. Prohibitions
(No previous changes)

(new) **D.** There shall be no use of cellular phones and/or other audible communication devices by delegates in the Representative Assembly.

IMPACT STATEMENT:
This amendment would prohibit the use of cellular telephones, "and/or other audible communication devices" by delegates while the Representative Assembly is in session. In addition to cellular telephones, the amendment would appear to prohibit the use of pagers or two-way radios by delegates. As written, the amendment would apply to the use of such devices for personal reasons and would also preclude members of state delegations from communicating among themselves or with other delegations about the business of the Representative Assembly.

Contact Person: Dianna Napolski, Illinois

BYLAW AMENDMENT 1

PROPOSED TITLE: To increase the amount of the NEA Student Program rebate from ten dollars ($10) to twenty dollars ($20).

Bylaw 2-7. Membership Dues
(no previous changes)

c. The Association shall allow credit to first-year Active members who join the Association during their first year of membership eligibility, the reduction of their dues being [ten dollars ($10)] twenty dollars ($20) per year for each year of their membership in Student NEA and/or for each year of their NEA Student membership up to four (4) years. The first-year Active member shall provide proof of membership in Student NEA to be eligible for credit, and the Association shall verify NEA Student membership.
(no further changes)

IMPACT STATEMENT:
The amendment would raise the amount of the NEA Student Program rebate from ten dollars ($10) to twenty dollars ($20). The following new business item (NBI), intended to implement a change in the dues rebate for NEA Student members, was adopted by the 2002 NEA Representative Assembly:

NEA will increase the student program rebate from $10.00 to $20.00 per year (2002-22)

After the 2002 Representative Assembly it was determined that the change to the NEA Student Program rebate proposed by the NBI would necessitate an amendment to the language of the NEA Bylaws that sets the amount of the Student Program rebate. After consultation with the sponsors of NBI 2002-22, the NEA Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules drafted and introduced an amendment to the NEA Bylaws to implement the previously-approved NBI for consideration by the 2003 NEA Representative Assembly.

Contact: NEA Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 1

TITLE: To require that Active members employed as Educational Staff Associates be represented on the NEA Board of Directors at least in proportion to their membership in the Association.

Article V. Board of Directors
Section 1. Composition
(new) **g.** Active members employed in Educational Staff Associates (ESA) positions shall be represented on the Board at least in proportion to their membership in the Association. If the percentage of such members elected to the Board fails to achieve such proportional representation, the Representative Assembly shall elect at large the number required to assure such representation. Candidates for these positions shall be nominated by the delegates at the Representative Assembly who are Active members employed in education staff associate positions.

(Current section g. will be designated h. and all subsequent sections redesignated accordingly.)

Contact Person: K. Elisabeth Genest, Washington

Candidates Running for NEA Office

Lily Eskelsen
Candidate for NEA Secretary/Treasurer

Having served as NEA Secretary-Treasurer this year has reaffirmed my belief that the continued financial strength of our Association is key to winning the battles ahead. NEA must protect our 2.7 million members from a national testing mania, attacks on teacher and ESP compensation and attempted retreats from a decade's worth of gains in class size reduction, due process and retirement security.

To accomplish this, NEA must build membership with a new generation, harness the power of a generation of retired members and be relevant to the priority work of our state affiliates.

Mark Cebulski
Candidate for NEA Executive Committee

The NEA needs to keep moving. Our organization must meet many needs, both internally and externally. We can do so by energizing the activist in all of us; creating great schools for every student; relating professionalism to gaining benefits for our members; and accelerating our political action to secure the allies we need to provide us with the support we deserve.

Thomas Jefferson said, "Education is the anvil on which democracy is forged." Never has there been a time in which this statement can be better applied. Through dynamic action, the NEA can be one of the cornerstones of democracy by being the major voice of public educational leadership and by continuing its commitment to human and civil rights.

Carolyn Crowder
Candidate for NEA Executive Committee

To combat the many issues facing education, NEA members must elect Tomorrow's Leaders—Today! NEA Executive Committee members should be people of commitment and vision with the courage to take action against all odds.

Effective leaders utilize communication skills, collaborative opportunities and experience in bargaining and professional advocacy to make the tough decisions needed in today's political climate. Drawing upon the strength of our organization's diversity, NEA officers must connect with every NEA member as well as students and the community to make education a priority.

With public education's survival at stake, we can't just talk about what needs to be done. We've got to get out there and make it happen. Together, we can make the NEA, Tomorrow's Leader—Today!

Wayne Nadeau
Candidate for NEA Executive Committee

An NEA Executive Committee member must possess the vision and commitment that will be required to assist the NEA leadership team address issues related to professionalism, unionism and public policy. Experienced leadership will be critical to help NEA to effectively meet the challenges and opportunities that our association and public education are facing. NEA must provide collaborative leadership with its affiliates around ballot initiative and legislative issues.

The vitality of NEA will depend on a commitment to membership development and our ability to help forge initiatives that attract and retain new teachers. A priority of NEA and its Executive Committee must be to work with affiliates to encourage the political involvement of our members as advocates for public education employees and quality public schools.

Kathy Zurfluh
Candidate for NEA Executive Committee

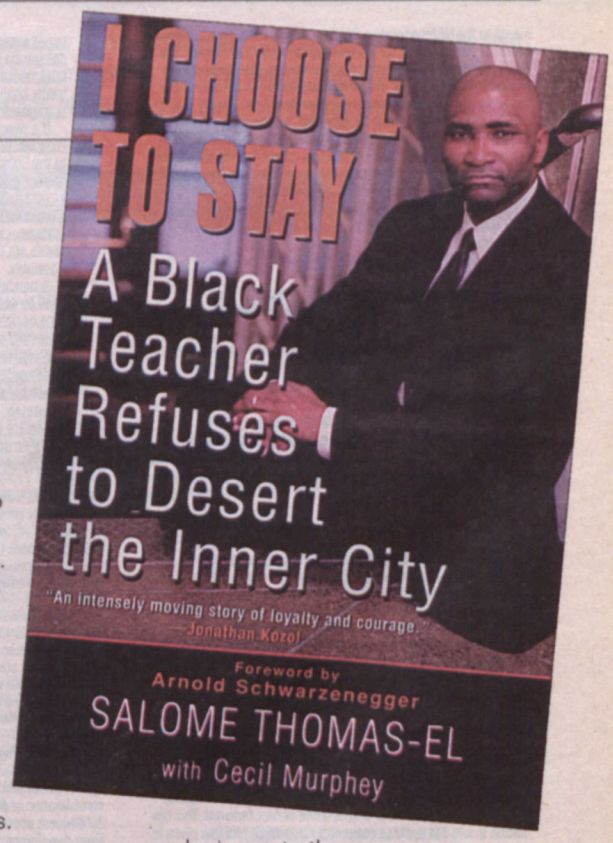
Dedicated educators make a profound difference in the lives of their students. For years, NEA has been the organization that provides educators with the tools necessary to accomplish their collective mission.

As public education and NEA face added challenges, we must maintain our strength and ability to advocate for members. Public educators deserve working conditions and compensation commensurate with the services they provide. They also deserve the right to engineer accountability systems that enhance their ability to be successful, instead of creating roadblocks to success.

We have the collective wisdom and ability to move mountains on behalf of our students and profession.

Giving—And Getting Back

A teacher uses chess to show his students they can slam-dunk their way to success—without ever picking up a ball.


I CHOOSE TO STAY
A Black Teacher Refuses to Desert the Inner City
"An intensely moving story of loyalty and courage."
—Jonathan Kozol
Foreword by
Arnold Schwarzenegger
SALOME THOMAS-EL
with Cecil Murphey

I CHOOSE TO STAY: A BLACK TEACHER REFUSES TO DESERT THE INNER CITY
By **Salome Thomas-EL** with **Cecil Murphey**
304 pp. $23 hardback; Kensington Publishing Corp. (www.kensington.com).

Tales about do-good educators who inspire kids to achieve are a dime a dozen. To inspire, after all, is one of the unspoken prerequisites of the profession. What's rare about Salome Thomas-EL's story is not simply that he gets to tell it himself in this impassioned memoir. (Most teachers have neither the time nor the privilege.) It's also that the author is an African-American man—in an elementary school, at that—which puts him in an ever-fading category in public schools today.

In *I Choose to Stay,* Thomas-EL affirms what many educators already know and believe: Underprivileged students can do great things when they have a community of adults who firmly care and believe in them. When they also have teachers who can personally identify with their struggles—racially, economically, socially—all the better. And in this case, it is all the better, for great things really did happen, and still are, under Thomas-EL's tutelage.

Remarkably, one of the magic bullets is chess. Thomas-EL tells how he uses this game of intellectual muscle to teach Philadelphia students lifelong lessons that help them break the cycle of violence, teenage pregnancy, drugs, gangs, and illiteracy. In the end they take home not just championship victories, but victories over low self-esteem and underachievement.

Thomas-EL says he had a hunch it could be done. A Philadelphia native, he was raised in the projects along with seven siblings by a single mom. Though he ended up at a school for gifted junior high students and then at a prestigious college, he says he was forever aware of the opportunities his peers would never get. And so despite numerous work experiences and teaching jobs at more affluent schools, he became determined to teach in the disadvantaged neighborhoods of his hometown.

When he finally did, students saw him almost as an oddity. "I wasn't the kind of role model they had seen," he writes, "because their eyes had been filled with dreams of becoming multimillionaire athletes." His goal, he says, "was to get them to strive for an MBA instead of the NBA."

A math teacher, Thomas-EL thought of chess—"a game of algebraic concepts"—as a way to spur excitement. And so in 1994, while teaching at Robert Vaux Middle School, he began using its concepts in class. Lessons turned into lunchtime chess, which progressed to after school, weekends, and then to summer.

But to be able to play, Thomas-EL had rules. Students had to keep up with class work. They had to behave—to learn to resolve conflicts with their minds instead of their fists. They had to develop stamina and patience. The result: School attendance improved, grades soared, and behavior turned positive. Along the way, students competed in a slew of tournaments, and won some major championships.

All was not glory, however. Between 1996 and 2000, while the chess team racked up successes, 20 of Thomas-EL's students were murdered. "I loved seeing kids achieve, but it always hurt—like a personal failure—when one of them turned in the wrong direction," he writes. He eventually chalked it up to his best efforts just not being enough.

What he did give to those who succeeded was a bounty of gifts, and in recounting the stories, Thomas-EL spares no details about his own sacrifices, which sometimes makes him sound more boastful than perhaps he intended. He opens the book, for example, recounting how he turned down an assistant principalship, a promotion with a $20,000 raise. (He eventually did become a principal.)

Despite that, the book is an inspiring read, one that would uplift and rejuvenate the most battle-worn teacher. Certainly it would propel anyone—perhaps even more Black men—to seriously mull over a teaching career in the schools that beckon for help the loudest. ✔

—Tamara Henry

EXCERPT

"My goal was to get them to strive for an MBA instead of the NBA. They had to figure it out for themselves. And the best way I knew to do that was to be myself and to show them love. I determined that no child would leave my classes without knowing he or she was loved. I wanted to be a father figure to them. Deep inside, I wanted to be for them the kind of father I never had myself."

BOOKS by NEA Members

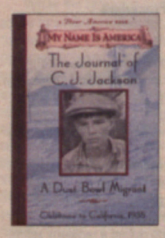
Reconsidering Read-Aloud
By Mary Lee Hahn

Reading aloud is a time of enjoyment and relaxation for teachers and students. This book looks at both the spontaneous and planned conversations surrounding read-aloud. Drawing from her experience as a fourth- and fifth-grade teacher, Mary Lee Hahn offers practical ways to make your read-alouds count. A study guide to help teachers explore the concepts of the book in greater depth is available at www.stenhouse.com/0351.htm (the book can be ordered here as well). 168 pp. $16 from Stenhouse Publishers.

Growing Up Abolitionist
By Harriet Hyman Alonso

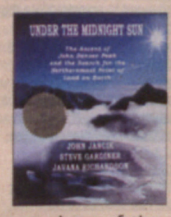
This book tells the story of William Lloyd Garrison's seven children whose lives were shaped by the great 19th-century campaigns against slavery, racism, war, and the repression of women. A history professor, Alonso writes how they collectively and individually became involved in the struggles for racial justice, women's rights, anti-imperialism, and peace. 409 pp. $24.95 from the University of Massachusetts Press. To order, go to www.umass.edu/umpress/FW02/alonso.html.

The Journal of C.J. Jackson: A Dust Bowl Migrant, Oklahoma to California, 1935
By William Durbin



This journal is the tale of a young man's perseverance during the Dust Bowl in the Oklahoma panhandle. Desperate to survive the country's difficult times, C.J. and his family head to California where they hope to make a better life. The book illustrates the issues facing farmers and migrant workers during that era. 168 pp., $10.95 from Scholastic, Inc. For more, go to www.scholastic.com/titles/mynameisamerica/timeline/index.htm. To order, go amazon.com.

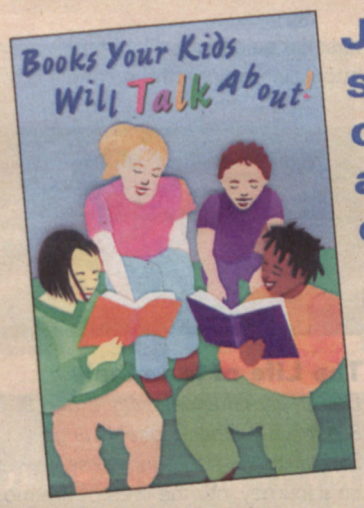
Under the Midnight Sun
By John Jancik, Steve Gardiner, and Javana Richardson



As members of the "2001 Return To The Top Of The World Expedition," the authors write of their exciting journey to unexplored reaches of the Arctic. The nine-member team successfully summited the highest unclimbed peak in the Roosevelt Range, the northernmost on Earth. The book includes magnificent photos by National Geographic photographer Galen Rowell. 197 pp. $29.95. from StarsEnd Creations. To order, write to StarsEnd Creations, 8547 East Arapahoe Road, #J224, Greenwood Village, CO 80112, or fax 303/694-4098.

For more NEA member books, visit the NEA Today website at www.nea.org/neatoday and click on "Books by NEA Members Online."

From the NEA Professional Library



Join a free summer book club to talk about great children's books

Educators, parents, librarians, and others are invited to take part in a free, online Summer Book Club to talk about great children's books. Sponsored by Reading Rockets, the club will include discussions on 16 children's books and how to use them to get kids ages 4-9 talking and excited about reading. The books are drawn from the forthcoming NEA Professional Library publication called *Books Your Kids Will Talk About!* Co-authors Maria Salvadore and Susan Hepner will moderate three online discussions about the books:

- **"Yes I Can!" books on July 17**
- **"Getting Through Scary Times" books on July 30**
- **"A Different Perspective" books on August 12.**

To sign-up, send an e-mail with "Book Club" in the subject line to readingrockets@weta.org. For more, go to www.readingrockets.org/summerbookclub.php.

FREE OR INEXPENSIVE

Building a House on a Budget

Building Homes of Our Own is an interactive teaching tool developed for the middle school classroom environment. The Microsoft® Windows®-compatible CD-ROM game presents a macro view of the entire home building process from site selection to final sale. Players collect information, solve problems, and make choices as they build a 3D home against a budget. When complete, they review credit applications and sell to the buyer of their choice. Part of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) ongoing educational outreach initiative, in partnership with the National Housing Endowment, Freddie Mac, and the Fannie Mae Foundation, Building Homes of Our Own is free to educators. To register for a copy, go to www.homesofourown.com.

Lessons Plans from the Peace Corps

Standards-based, language arts lesson plans, and workshops based on the uniquely personal stories written by Peace Corps authors can be accessed online. The materials that comprise Voices from the Field: Reading and Writing About the World, Ourselves, and Others strengthen students' reading comprehension and writing skills, engage and inspire students to create their own personal meanings and narratives, and broaden students' perspectives of the world. For more information, or to download materials, go to www.peacecorps.gov/wws/guides/voices/stories.html.

Free Science Posters

Educators can obtain copies of up to seven science posters from the Wright Center for Science Education at Tufts University. To preview the posters, go to www.tufts.edu/as/wright_center/svl/posters/posts.html. You must submit a written request on school letterhead to Wright Center, Department W, Room 267 C, Science & Technology Center, Tufts University, 4 Colby Street, Medford, MA 02155. You can also request a pedagogical teachers guide that accompanies the posters.

Asking Good Questions

How can teachers ask their students intelligent, clear, searching questions? *Questioning in the Primary School* by E.C. Wragg and G. Brown give primary school teachers strategies to help them ask questions to engage students and improve interaction. Wragg and Brown discuss types of questions and how body language and the tone you use to ask a question has an impact on how students respond. 96 pp. $16.95 from RoutledgeFalmer. To order, visit www.routledgefalmer.com.

Sound and Music

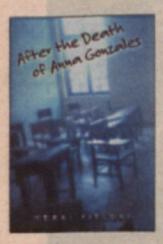
What's the difference between sound and noise? In *Science Experiments with Sound and Music*, authors Shar Levine and Leslie Johnstone explain complex concepts like sound waves with the help of a Slinky™ and also why if you press your ear to a glass that is pressed against a wall you can hear what's happening on the other side. Using materials you could easily find at home, young people can understand how different musical instruments work and why certain objects make certain sounds. 80 pp. $10.95 from Sterling Publishing. To order, visit www.sterlingpub.com or call 212/532-7160.

TAKE NOTE

Remember National School Nurse Day on May 7. The day recognizes the work of school nurses and helps communities develop a better understanding of their roles in the educational setting. For more, contact the National Association of School Nurses at 303/663-2329 or visit www.nasn.org.

After the Death of Anna Gonzales

By Terri Fields



Inspired by her feelings of despair over teenage suicide, author and educator Terri Fields wrote this collection of thought-provoking poems that center on the suicide of fictitious high school freshman Anna Gonzales and portrays her classmates' and teachers' reactions to the loss. When read together, these poems create a moving testimony to the effects of one girl's devastating choice. 100 pp. $16.95 from Henry Holt and Company. To order, go to www.vhpsva.com/bookseller/HBGenInfoHowTo.html.

TVTIPS

Hitler: The Rise of Evil

CBS, May 18 and May 20, 9 p.m., ET, check local listings.

CBS

This four-hour mini series explores Hitler's rise to power in the Nazi party during the years prior to World War II. Hitler, played by Robert Carlyle, takes advantage of the economic devastation following World War I to rally Germans to greatness, but on his terms. He surrounds himself with a tight band of admirers and enforcers and manipulates his enemies. The series ends in 1934, before the "Final Solution," but Hitler's menace to the Jews is clear. The show tries to address the haunting questions of history, asking not just how did this happen, but why could he not be stopped?

A KIDSNET-produced study guide for high school teachers is available. Developed in conjunction with a leading Holocaust researcher and an award-winning historical writer, the guide includes six pages of activities, extensive resources, and discussion questions available in PDF format from www.KIDSNET.org.

TV Tips are provided by KIDSNET, a national resource for children's media in Washington, D.C., www.kidsnet.org, and from Cable in the Classroom at www.ciconline.org.

TVTIPS

A Walk in Your Shoes: Teen Pregnancy

The N, May 7, 9 p.m., ET/PT.

A New Jersey cheerleader and her boyfriend exchange places with a teen couple who are the parents of a toddler. The pretend parents arrive late, can't stand to change a diaper, and don't know how to keep the toddler engaged for even one morning. The real teen parents work part-time jobs, attend a teen parenting group, and long for their former carefree lives. Produced in partnership with the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, this half-hour episode is an excellent conversation starter for teachers, teens, and parents. A special parent discussion guide is available at http:\\discussions.the-n.com.

Donna Svennevik/The N

The Life of Mammals

Discovery Channel, May 8 and 9, 8 p.m., ET. Check local listings.

Sir David Attenborough takes viewers on a journey into the lives of the most successful animals on the planet—the mammals. In this six-hour series, he "spies" on an Australian platypus and her baby using high-tech camera equipment, and swims with manatees and encounters—at close quarters—a giant blue whale. The series tells the story of 4,000 species, which have outlived the dinosaurs and colonized every part of the globe, dry or wet, hot or cold. Their adaptations for finding food have also profoundly affected how they move, socialize, mate, and breed.

Nick News: Special Edition

NICK, May 16 and 21, 6 a.m., ET. Check local listings.

This series of specials from the Emmy, NEA, and Peabody Award-winning news magazine for kids in grades 4–6 was created and produced by Linda Ellerbee. This month's program, "The Thrill of the Chill: Kids and Stress," examines stress induced by the real world and kids' anxiety over what they see in the news. It also looks into how to deal with and relieve stress. The show can be taped and used in the classroom for 10 years.

Lawrence Lucier/Nickelodeon

Amazing Destinations (Assignment Discovery)

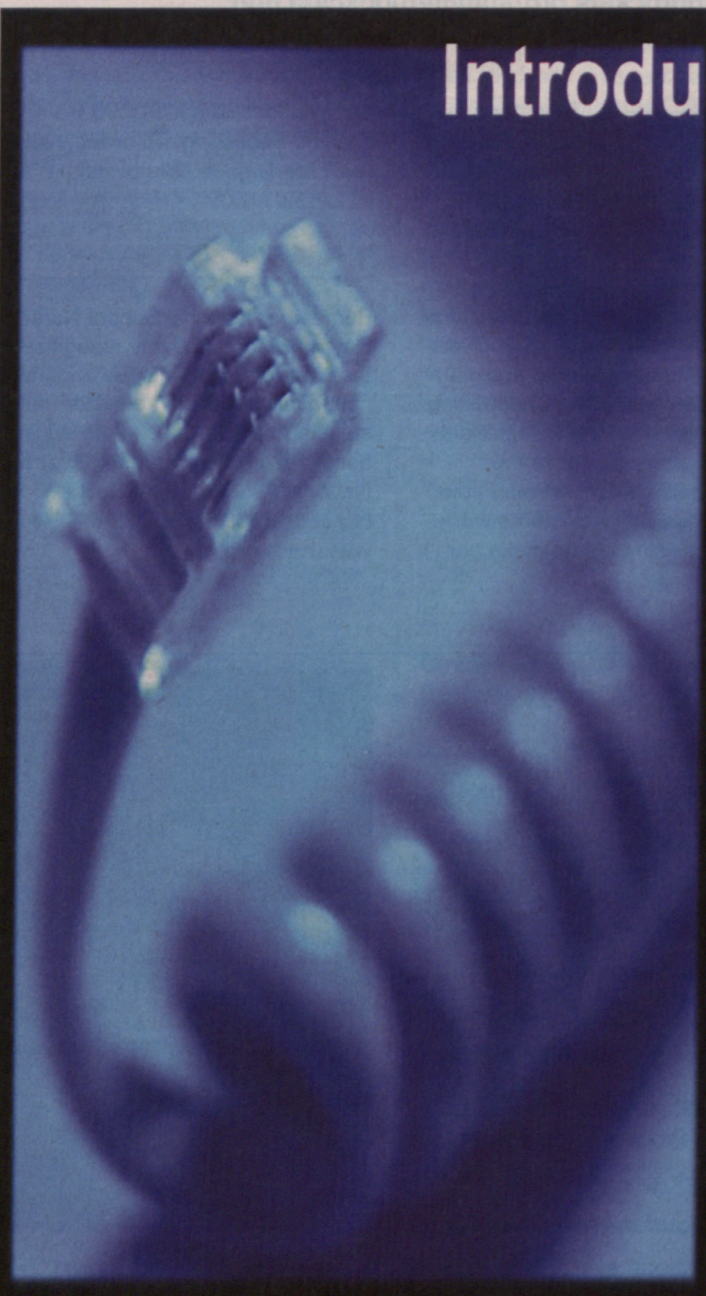
Discovery Channel, May 22, 9 a.m., ET. Check local listings.

This series tours some of the world's finest cultural centers and scenic destinations. This episode, "Peru & Brazil" visits some unique locations of cultural, geographical, and historical significance in these South American nations, including the Brazilian federal state of Bahia, where steps were taken that led to the construction of modern-day Brazil, and Machu Picchu's remains of the ancient Incan civilization. The show can be taped and used in the classroom for one year with teaching materials available at http://school.discovery.com.

Ken Burns American Stories

PBS, May 26. Check local listings.

This series features works from the Ken Burns library. Using historical photographs and newsreels, live footage, and interviews, this program "The Congress" explores the history and promise of this unique American institution, chronicling the personalities, events, and issues that have animated the first 200 years of Congress and, in turn, our country. Can be taped and used in the classroom for one year.



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NEA members have saved more than $650,000,000 for their retirements with the NEA Valuebuilder Program.

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Concerned about retirement? School districts around the country are now offering 457 Deferred Compensation Plans, and many of them are making the NEA Valuebuilder®, Mutual Fund 457 Plan available to members. You may want to inquire if your school district offers this NEA-endorsed program.

As a Trust Account under Section 457 (g) of the Internal Revenue Code, a 457 plan gives you the opportunity to save and invest for retirement on a tax-deferred basis, even if you are already contributing to a 403 (b).

When you participate in a 457 program, you may contribute up to $12,000 tax-deferred in 2003. If you're age 50 or older, you have a unique opportunity to set aside even more through special "catch-up" contributions. The 2003 catch-up limit is $2,000. You may also be able to make additional catch-up contributions during the three years prior to the normal retirement age defined by your plan. All these contribution limits are on top of what you already may be contributing to a 403 (b) plan.

The NEA Valuebuilder Mutual Fund 457 offers many of the same advantages as the other NEA Valuebuilder products, including 40 different investment options from some of the country's oldest and largest money managers, flexible pricing alternatives, and personalized asset allocation and rebalancing with the assistance of experienced financial counselors.

Find out more about the advantages of the NEA Valuebuilder Mutual Fund 457 by calling 800/NEA-VALU. An NEA Valuebuilder Financial Representative will be happy to answer your questions and discuss how to start building for your retirement future.

WEB WINNERS

The Role of Our Oceans

What role do oceans play in the lives and economics of the world's population? Find out on the United Nations' Atlas of the Oceans site. The Atlas includes four main sections: 1) about the oceans—including history, biology, maps, statistics, climatology, and ecology; 2) uses of the ocean—such as fishing, shipping, and tourism; 3) issues—such as food security and human health; and 4) geography—information categorized by geographical area. Go to www.oceansatlas.org.

We the People

Need to look up something in the Constitution? Or the Articles of Confederation? Then visit this site for the text of historical documents,

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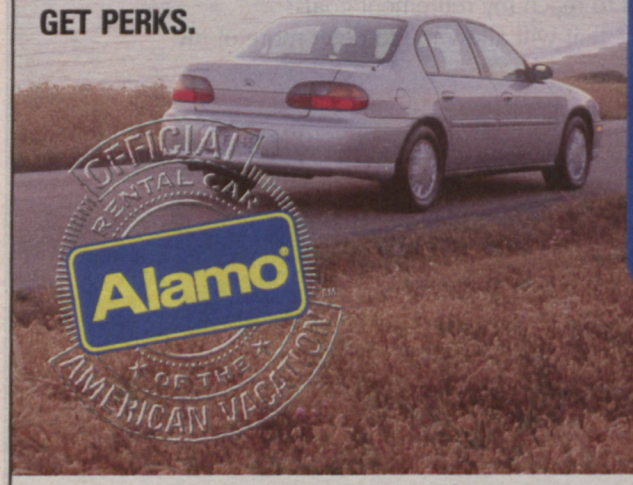

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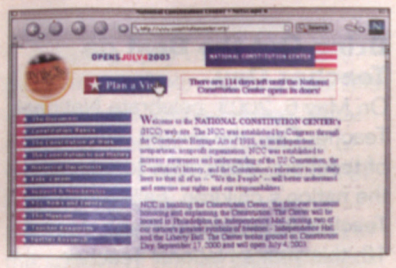

and a history of the Constitution. The "Teacher Resources" section helps teachers locate materials for teaching the Constitution and other civics-related topics to students of all ages. Teachers will find lesson plans and ideas for classroom activities, as well as links to other sites. Go to www.constitutioncenter.org.

Click on Current Events

Looking for ways to teach current events? Check out the C-SPAN website, which features information on the branches of government, recent public speeches, video archives, current events lesson plans and activities, and the chance for educators and students to send questions to C-SPAN guests. Go to www.c-span.org/classroom.

The Mummy Maker

Want to be an embalmer's assistant in ancient Egypt and help prepare a body for burial? This quick, educational, interactive game takes students through the steps of preparing Egyptian mummies, aided only by their concentration and hints from the embalmer's cat. Other links on this BBC site include articles on Egypt past and present. Go to www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians/mummy_maker_game.shtml.

DIVERSITY Calendar

May

May 1-31—Better Hearing and Speech Month
The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association sponsors this month to raise public awareness about how to identify, prevent, and treat speech, language, and hearing disorders. For more on these issues, go to www.asha.org.

May 1-31—Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
This month is the time to celebrate the collective accomplishments of Asian Pacific Americans, who include many ethnic groups with diverse backgrounds. For more, go to www.infoplease.com/spot/asianhistory1.html.

May 26—Memorial Day
Originally called Decoration Day, this federal holiday honors those who died in war. The day is marked by speeches, parades, and ceremonies. For more, go to www.educationworld.com/ a_lesson/lesson119.shtml.

June

June 5—World Environment Day
This day is celebrated throughout the globe to increase awareness about recycling, air quality, tree preservation, and other earth friendly solutions. Beginning in 1972 by the United Nations General Assembly, the day includes clean-up rallies, parades, concerts, and political campaigns. For more, go to www.unep.org/wed/2002/ WED2002/Default.asp.

June 16—Anniversary of the First Woman in Space
In 1963, Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman in space on this date, making a 70-hour, 50-minute voyage and orbiting the earth 48 times in the Soviet spacecraft *Vostok 6*. On June 18, 1983, Sally Ride became the first American woman in space as part of the space shuttle *Challenger* crew.

June 19—Juneteenth
African-Americans celebrated the end of slavery on this day in 1865. Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation, and told the slaves they were free. The former slaves named this day "Juneteenth" and the celebrations continue today with family reunions, picnics, barbeques, and prayer services. For more, visit www.juneteenth.com.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

High School Science Competition

The Siemens Westinghouse Competition, a signature program of the New Jersey-based Siemens Foundation, is the nation's leading research-based science and math competition for high school students. This prestigious national competition with its rigorous judging procedures awards college scholarships ranging from $1,000 to $100,000. Students may enter as individuals or as part of a team.

Entries are judged at the regional and national levels by scientists and faculty from six leading research universities. The competition is administered by the College Board and its partner, Educational Testing Service.

Instructions for the 2003-04 Siemens Westinghouse Competition in Math, Science & Technology are now online at the Siemens Foundation website, www.siemens-foundation.org. Students can register for the competition at the website beginning July 1, 2003. Students who are not able to complete the online process should call 800/626-9795 ext. 454 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET. The deadline for entries is October 1, 2003.

Is there a **new teacher** in the family?

Teaching is hereditary—it tends to run in families. If you have a son or daughter—or even a niece or nephew—who's graduating from student teaching to the real thing, consider a graduation gift befitting the occasion. **The NEA Professional Library** has the gifts you need to help get all the graduates on your list off to a great start!

Your daughter will be heading up her own classroom in a few months. Give her a leg up with our best-selling **Graduation Gift Pack**, featuring three great handbooks for teaching rookies.

Countdown to the First Day of School lays out a step-by-step checklist that'll have her poised and ready to succeed the day the school doors open.

Pitfalls and Potholes: A Checklist for Avoiding Common Mistakes of Beginning Teachers offers the sensible strategies she'll never read in any textbook.

Bright Ideas: A Pocket Mentor for Beginning Teachers provides the sort of usable advice that every teacher needs and few teachers get.

Item #2170-3-0S-D
Get all three books for a special NEA members-only price of **$12.95**
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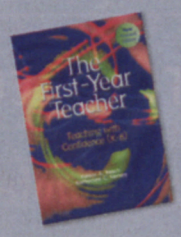

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Your son will have his hands full those first few weeks of school, trying to put all he learned in class into practice. Give him a wealth of knowledge from experienced teachers with ***The First-Year Teacher: Teaching with Confidence (K-8)***. He'll learn proven strategies for surviving those critical first weeks of school.

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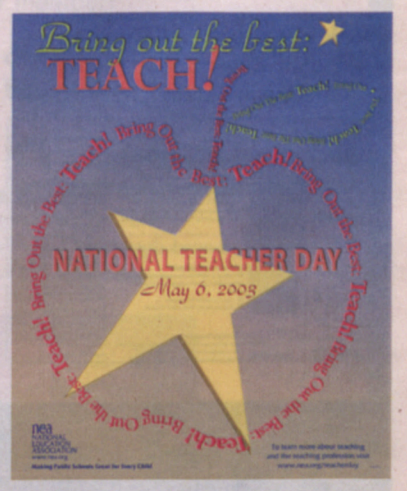
Bring Out the Best on Teacher Day

On May 6, 2003, celebrate National Teacher Day, the annual recognition of teachers' dedication to educating the nation's children. Falling during Teacher Appreciation Week, May 4-10, this year's National Teacher Day's theme is "Bring Out the Best: Teach!" NEA is working to bring out the best by promoting the teaching profession, encouraging talented youth and mid-career adults to consider our worthy profession, and recruiting potential teachers. For more, go to www.nea.org/teacherday.



Coaches Against Gun Violence

The Alliance for Justice is launching the Coaches Against Gun Violence Campaign through its Co/Motion Program, which aims to foster youth-led issue awareness. The Campaign is a nationwide effort to raise awareness for the prevention of gun violence with the help of high school coaches.

The Coaches Against Gun Violence Campaign encourages high school coaches, athletic directors, principals, and educators from around the country to dedicate one game a season to the prevention of gun violence. As a participant in the program, each school will receive an organizing packet that includes suggestions for activities, statistical research on gun violence, and various resources. For more information, contact Matt Teper, Alliance for Justice, 11 Dupont Circle N.W., 2nd Floor Washington, DC 20036; ph: 202/822-6070; fax: 202/822-6068; mteper@afj.org.

Nominate Student Heroes

The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes seeks nominations for its 2003 awards. The prize, founded by young adult author T.A. Barron, recognizes young people ages 8 to 18 who have shown leadership and courage in public service to people and our planet. Barron Prize winners each receive $2,000 toward their higher education or their service project.

A *Bibliography of Heroes*, compiled with the help of many librarians and teachers, and a *Heroes Study Guide*, written by Kylene Beers of the National Council of Teachers of English, are available to support teachers and librarians interested in the subject of heroes and heroism.

Adults may nominate young heroes for the 2003 Barron Prize until May 30, 2003. To nominate a young hero, or to download the *Bibliography of Heroes* or *Study Guide*, visit www.barronprize.org.

National Hunger Awareness Day

Observe the second National Hunger Awareness Day on June 5, 2003. Sponsored by America's Second Harvest, the largest hunger-relief organization in the United States, the day focuses attention on the increasing number of hungry Americans and highlights the many ways people can help relieve hunger in their own communities.

You can help end hunger by:

- Volunteering in your community—from sorting groceries to serving food to lending your professional skills. Your local food bank or food rescue organization can tell you how to help.
- Donating food and grocery products—Give needed items at community food drives or organize your own. Contact your local food bank to help you get started.
- Supporting policies to end hunger—Write your state and national legislators to show your support for programs that will help end hunger in America. Visit www.secondharvest.org to learn about current legislation.
- Spreading the word about hunger—Send a letter to the editor of your local paper. Talk to your friends, family, and co-workers about the great need and how they can help.
- Making a financial gift—send your donation to get food to hungry people across our country. Call 800/771-2303 or visit www.secondharvest.org to make a financial contribution.

Celebrating Mother's Day

The Something to Remember Me By Legacy Project is celebrating keepsakes with a free online Mother's

Another Middle East Casualty: Learning

Education in the Palestinian territories and Israel is suffering major damage due to the continuing violence, according to a delegation dispatched last October by Education International, the world federation of education unions of which NEA is a member.

According to visitors, the conflict hinders access to Palestinian schools and diverts money from Israeli education. In the Palestinian territories, for example, curfews periodically close schools. In the Bethlehem area, the school year was extended by a month, but curfews cut the actual number of school days from 180 days a year to 140. Even when there is no curfew, delays in passing through checkpoints often keep teachers and students away, Education International reported. And student motivation is on the decline.

In Israel, increased spending on the military has cut into education funding, so that public high school classes now average more than 40 students.

The delegation urged Education International member organizations to lobby their governments to press for re-opening peace negotiations.

For more information on Education International's work, visit www.ei-ie.org.

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Day Activity Kit and Mother's Day Essay Contest. The K-12 kit includes intergenerational activities, lesson ideas, crafts, and resources. The contest asks students (8 years and up) to explore the history behind a family keepsake. Entries must be 300 words or less and about a real keepsake in the student's family passed down from a mother or grandmother, or one that the student hopes to receive.

The grand prize is a Lane cedar chest and a houseful of Lane furniture ($15,000 retail value). Other prizes include $200 book gift certificates from Books Are Fun. The best entries will be published in *Reminisce* magazine. For more, visit www.somethingtoremembermeby.org or call 800/772-7765.

Petition for Our Public Schools

Across the country, state budgets are being slashed and public schools are paying the price. Sadly, both in Washington and in many states, some elected officials are proposing vouchers, tuition tax credits, and other gimmicks that undermine public schools. In this urgent environment, People For the American Way has launched a new online petition to rally public support for ample resources and proven reforms for public schools. This petition enables Americans to voice support for public schools, while opposing vouchers, tuition tax credits, and other destructive gimmicks.

One of the site's goals is to build a million-member, nationwide network of citizens who are willing to stand up for our public schools and the children they serve. You can make your voice heard by signing the petition at www. PublicSchoolsFirst.org.

FREE OR INEXPENSIVE

Speaking Out for Justice

When people think of women writers leading the struggle for equality, most think of Harriet Beecher Stowe. But they should also think of Lydia Maria Child. A popular author of domestic handbooks, she made the decision in 1833 to write a "scathing indictment of slavery." In *Lydia Maria Child: The Quest for Racial Justice,* author Lori Kenschaft tells the life story of America's first professional woman writer to speak out for Black slaves, American Indians, women, and the poor. 128 pp. $24 from Oxford University Press. To order, call 800/445-9714 or visit www.oup-usa.org.

Games as a Teaching Tool

As a coach and teacher, author Adrian Harrison knows that children need innovative and fun ways to learn and play. In *36 Games Kids Love to Play,* Harrison provides safe, fun games whether indoors or out for K-4 children. Games include Rock, Paper, Scissors to settle disagreements, Human Alphabet, and a number of tag games that vary in difficulty. 78 pp. $12 from the Northeast Foundation for Children. To order, visit www.responsiveclassroom.org or call 800/360-6332.

Blazing a Trail

Ichiro Suzuki of the Seattle Mariners has had some incredible achievements upon his arrival to American baseball from Japan. Learning the value of hard work, and balancing mind and body from his father, Suzuki became an American League All-Star, Rookie of the Year, and MVP. Suzuki raises the bar for athletic performance and helps to change the face of baseball and defy stereotypes. Author Mark Stewart adds Suzuki to the Sports' New Wave biography series in *Ichiro Suzuki: Best in the West.* 48 pp. $23.90 from Millbrook Press. To order, visit www.millbrookpress.com or call 800/462-4703.

A Spring Thing

Spring isn't just another season for author Linda Glaser—it's a celebration. Every page in *It's Spring,* is a

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tribute to the budding leaves, singing birds returning to build their nests, and longer days where the "sun sets after dinner." Cut-paper illustrations by Susan Swan create fun 3-D-type images that jump off the page in the book written for preK-K children. 32 pp. $21.90 from Millbrook Press. To order, visit www.millbrookpress.com or call 800/462-4703.

Our Favorite Pastime—En Español y Inglés

Looking for reading material for your young baseball fans? Have them open *Latino Baseball's Hottest Hitters/Los Mejores Bateadores del Béisbol Latino*, a dual-language sports book by Mark Stewart (with Mike Kennedy) with Spanish text by Manuel Kalmanovitz. This book contains photos and facts about today's shining Latino baseball stars such as Alex Rodriguez, and Sammy Sosa discusses the 150-year history of baseball and Spanish-speaking people. 64 pp. $26.90 from Millbrook Press. To order, visit www.millbrookpress.com or call 800/462-4703.

Baby on Board

While the rest of high school senior Sam Pettigrew's peers play sports and hang out with friends, he has an even more demanding extracurricular activity—his son Max. *Hanging on to Max* takes a rare look into the life of a young dad who decides to take an active role in his son's life. Even though author Margaret Bechard uses humor to discuss the serious topic of teenage parenthood, this book can be a way to open a dialogue with young adults about taking responsibility for their choices. 160 pp. $22.90 by Roaring Brook Press. To order, visit www.millbrookpress.com or call 800/462-4703.

Join NEA's Read Across America and Random House to celebrate Seussentennial: A Century of Imagination!

In 2004 NEA's Read Across America, Random House, and Dr. Seuss Enteprises will team up to kick off a year long tribute to the beloved Theodor Geisel, a.k.a. Dr. Seuss, surrounding the 100th anniversary of his birth! Our NEW Read Across America Kit will be more extensive than ever before with an invaluable BOUND TEACHERS RESOURCE GUIDE including lesson plans, planning calendar, reproducible journal pages, and more to help guide learning about the many facets of Theodor Geisel's amazing life and his enthralling contributions to children's literature! It will be the ULTIMATE SEUSS RESOURCE for use year after year to integrate engaging lessons for grades K-12!

Coming soon to a city near you—Countdown to Seussentennial!

A 40-city promotional tour with live performances of Seuss books and interactive Imagination Workshop for kids. January–March 2004

For more information on the Seussentennial visit us at www.Seussentennial.com. For information on NEA's Read Across America visit www.nea.org/readacross.

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in the Light Lane

Radio Waves

On a rainy morning, I was in my classroom getting things ready for the day, listening to a local radio station. The gal on the radio mentioned a rainbow song she learned as a little girl. I decided to call the station to help her with the song. After I sang it to her, she said, "You are so cheerful. You will brighten people's days."

When my kindergarten students arrived, they asked why I had the radio on. I told them I was going to be on. Just then, the song finished and my voice came on. The children stared at the radio in astonishment.

One child said, "Mrs. Fieldson, you are famous." A curious classmate pointed to the radio and added, "How did it feel to be in there?"

Tere Fieldson
Los Alamitos, California

While rehearsing with my junior high jazz band, I was telling my saxophone players to project their sound and think about aiming their sound toward an imaginary point on the opposite wall. One of my trombone players muttered under her breath, "They're gonna miss..."

David Johnson
Auburndale, Wisconsin

Our seventh grade goes to overnight camp at the beginning of September as a bonding activity. I am in a team with another teacher, and between us we have 48 students.

Just before we left, the mother of one of the quiet, serious boys came rushing into my classroom and gave me a package, saying, "Please keep an eye on Billy. One second he'll be fine and the next minute he'll start acting funny and that's when the problems really start! He gets nuts and it's all over, you never know when it's going to hit him." Then she left.

I turned over the package to see in bold letters "GIVE TO BILLY IF NUTS." I was concerned that I was not informed of Billy's psychological condition! It was not until a few days later that I realized what she was trying to tell me was that her son had a nut allergy.

Maryanne Cullinan
Weare, New Hampshire

Got Laughs?

● Have a funny school story, anecdote, or vignette you'd like to share with other NEA members? You can send contributions to "In the Light Lane"
NEA Today
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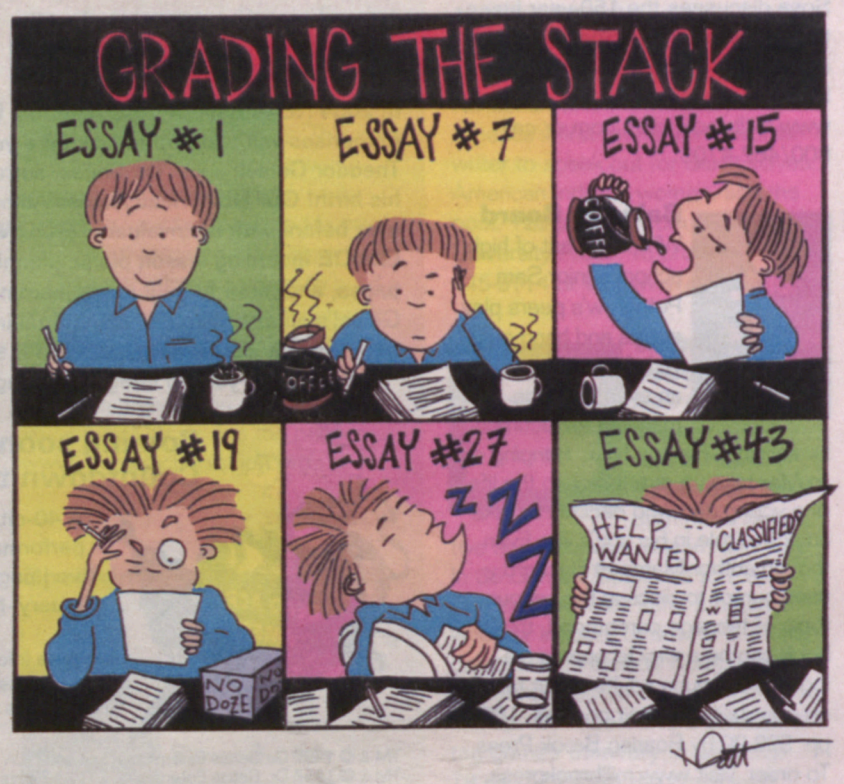
Fax: 202/822-7206
Send e-mail to neatoday@nea.org.

● Want a classroom chuckle delivered to your e-mail box once a week? Subscribe to the "In the Light Lane" mailing list. Just send an e-mail to join-lightlane@list.nea.org (no subject or message needed).



As a K-5 special education teacher I hear plenty of excuses from students not wanting to do their classwork. I decided to seize a "teachable moment" to emphasize that all of us have jobs. Their job is to be the student and learn as much as they possibly can, while my job is to be the teacher and make sure that they are learning as much as they possibly can.

Seeing their eyes rolling, I decided to share the fact that I am still going to school to become a better teacher. Hearing this, one of my spirited fourth graders' faces turned as white as a sheet, and he stammered, "You mean you don't know how to teach us yet?"

Amanda Suchodolski
Bay City, Michigan

I retired last June after working as an elementary library aide for 21 years. At the start of the new school year in September, a second-grade boy asked my replacement where I was. She explained that I had retired and wanted to spend more time with my husband.

He then asked, "Is Mrs. Pick having a baby?" If he thought at age 63 I looked young enough to have a baby, that was OK with me. It made my day!

Joan Pick
Danville, Pennsylvania

I told one of my fifth-grade students that he shouldn't pick up two chairs, adding that they would be too heavy even for me to carry. His reply? "That's because you're old."

The other students gasped, and one young lady raised her hand and corrected him. "My mom said it's rude to call someone 'old,'" she said. "You should say 'elderly'!"

Sue Cuttriss
Fillmore, California

I had just started explaining Kepler's laws when one of my students raised his hand and said, "Why would someone who knows so much about planets go into the cookie-making business?"

Caught completely off-guard, I tried to determine what I had said to cause the students to make the connection between cookies and planetary motion. All at once, I realized the connection and had to stifle my laughter: Instead of Kepler, the student had heard "Keebler." I assured my young pupil that elves and ellipses had little in common.

The next day, I brought in a cookie shaped like an ellipse to reinforce my lesson. Since then, I've discovered that the word association could help students—and after the instruction is over, the demonstration materials are tasty!

Pamela Galus
Omaha, Nebraska

Dream On

I teach a third-grade boy with ADHD who will say anything that comes into his head. One day as I worked with him, he asked me, "When you were little, what did you want to be when you grew up?" (Of course, this had nothing to do with the lesson at hand.)

I said I couldn't remember, but he replied, "Oh, come on, pick something." So I said that I vaguely remembered one time wanting to be a singer and dancer. "Oh Mrs. Chausse," he said, wrinkling his nose, "you don't have the voice for that."

Kris Chausse
Aledo, Illinois

Several years ago my son and daughter-in-law were married during the school year. All teachers in her school wore nametags. When Starlet returned to school, she pointed out to one of her students that she had a new nametag and asked him if he knew why. Very hesitantly he replied, "People were teasing you?"

Duane Heitz
Miltona, Minnesota

Sometimes we forget that kindergarten children haven't been around long enough to remember past technologies. I was taking out a record album from our music series to play one of the songs for the class, when a five-year-old stood up and said, "Wow, look at that big CD!"

Carol Edelblute
Neosho, Wisconsin

Being a physical education teacher in sunny Las Vegas, I wear shorts to school every day. One evening, I decided to change into dress slacks for our Science and Math Fair. I walked into the school office area, where a group of teachers and parents were socializing. One of our female teachers saw me and, in an innocent but very loud voice, said, "Mr. G, I didn't recognize you with your pants on!" Silence fell over the group, followed by side-splitting laughter!

Randy Gronert
Las Vegas, Nevada

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The new NEA MemberCare® Critical Illnessss Benefit provides up to $100,000 cash to help you pay related to catastrophic illness. For more information, call 800/884-2675, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., ET.

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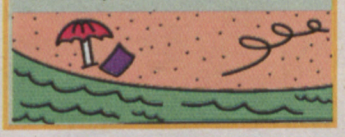

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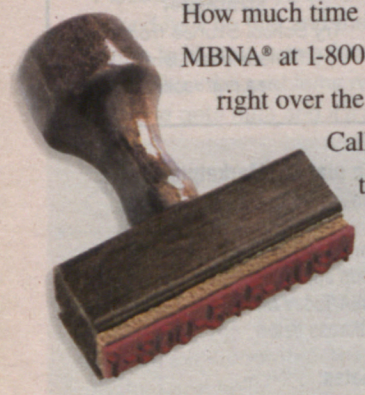

NEA Personal Loan Estimated Monthly Payment Chart

Loan Amount	Term: 24 months	36 months	48 months	60 months	72 months	84 months
$3,000	$138	$95	$74	$61	N/A	N/A
$10,000	$460	$317	$246	$204	$175	N/A
$15,000	$689	$475	$369	$305	$263	$233
$25,000	N/A	$792	$614	$508	$438	$388

All payment amounts and terms are estimates based on an APR of 6.99%†. See below for important APR disclosures.

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